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# Palestinian Women Prepare for Nairobi Showdown

by Baher al-Ashhab

Eighteen years after Israel took over the West Bank and Gaza and ten years after the UN International Conference on Women in Mexico City which designated 1975-1985 as the UN Decade for Women, the socio-economic status of Palestinian women has deteriorated dramatically due to Israeli military occupation, despite prepared Israeli studies alleging otherwise.

This is the message 13 Palestinian women from the occupied territories travelling to Nairobi this week will transmit to a forum of over 5000 women at the UN conference that marks the end of the UN Decade for Women. The conference, which consists of a Non-Government Organisations (NGO) forum (July 9-19) and a governmental forum (July 10-26), is expected to be politically charged. A showdown is predicted between the Palestinian and Israeli delegates, much like the confrontation at the second UN Conference on Women in Copenhagen in 1980, when the Israeli delegation was caught unprepared for the overwhelming support world women gave to the Palestinians.

This time, the Israelis vowed to put up a fierce fight. They have staged mock conferences over the last two years with the participation of numerous Zionist organisations and prepared several studies and press releases that were distributed all over the world. Their aim is to counter the Palestinian stand and to claim that the situation of women in the occupied territories has improved under Israeli "administration."

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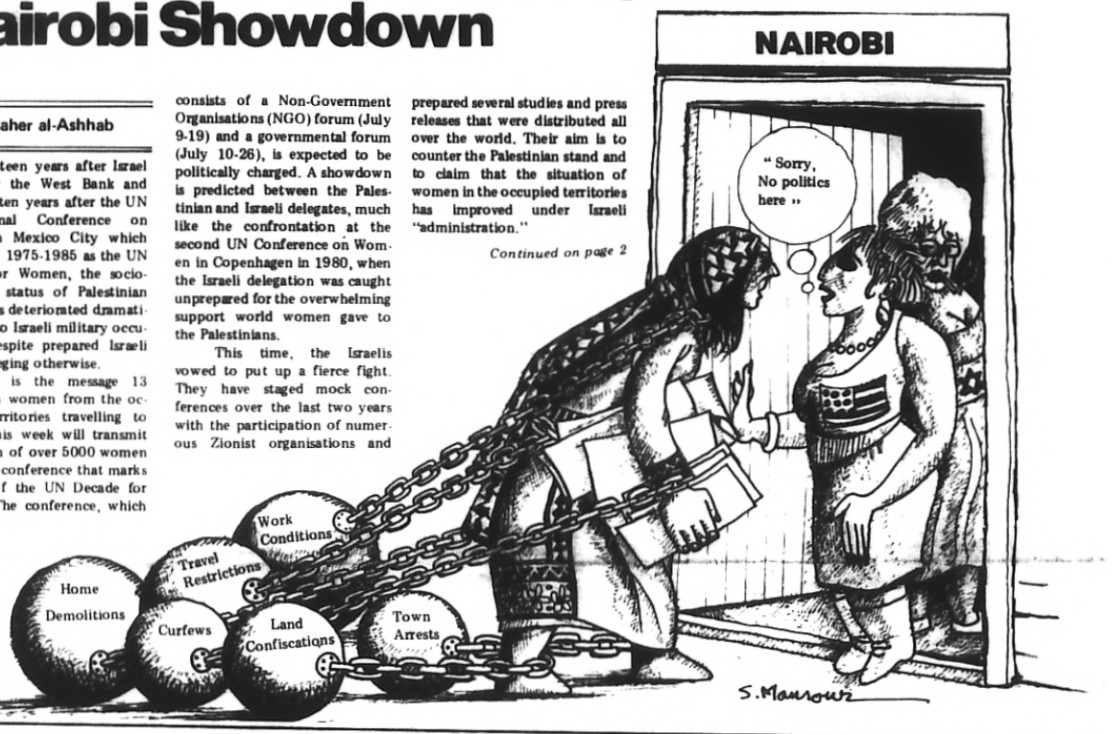


Palestinians, Poor are Hardest Hit

# Israel Takes Drastic Economic Steps

Following a marathon cabinet debate on June 30-July 1, Israel's national unity government unveiled its programme for economic stabilisation. The first phase of the programme has already gone into effect. It includes, among other things, the following measures: The shekel has been devalued by 18.8 percent and fixed at IS1500 = US$1; prices have been hiked by an average of 25 percent; government subsidies have been cut, sending the prices of previously subsidised services and commodities shooting up by between 50-100 percent; the government has cut its budget by US$750 million; 10,000 workers in the public sector are scheduled to be laid off in the next month; and all public employees are being forced to accept a three percent drop in wages. Palestinians in the occupied territories who have no government or union protection and channels to protest the economic moves will be the hardest hit by the new plan.

The government used the 1945 Emergency Regulations to implement its economic programme, which overrules former labour agreements.

The Histadrut Labour Federation responded to the government programme by calling a 24-hour general strike July 2, which brought the country to a standstill. That same evening, residents of Jerusalem's Katamon quarter took to the streets to protest the price rises, which they see as being unilaterally aimed against the poor.

The day after the general strike, the government met with Histadrut representatives, but failed to obtain the Histadrut's support for the new economic programme.

Speaking to the Israeli public on July 1, Prime Minister Shimon Peres (Labour) promised that within a short period of time, Israel's rampant inflation would be rolled back and the Israeli economy brought back to health.

The industrialists' association was delighted with the new economic measures and with the fact that emergency regulations were used to implement them, as they wipe out all the progress made by the trade union movement since the establishment of the state.

Speaking in the Knesset July 2, Histadrut Secretary-General Yisrael Kessar called it "a black day for the Israeli labour movement."

Although most of the Likud cabinet ministers voted against the programme when Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i presented the plan to the cabinet June 30, they all voted for the government in a no-confidence vote in the Knesset July 2, with the sole exception of Housing Minister David Levy. Levy, an able demogogue, has gone out on the warpath against the programme in a populist bid to boost his support among the Israeli underclass. Levy is considered one of the prime candidates to take over the leadership of the Likud party from Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir. However, thus far criticism of the programme has mostly come from the Histadrut and the left-wing opposition parties, which have contested the government's plan to reduce wages back to their pre-1980 levels in order to cut consumption and thereby halt inflation.

The industrialists and the rich have escaped relatively unscathed, as the main burden of the austerity measures will fall on the shoulders of salaried employees.

Most of the proposed US$750 million to be cut from the government budget will come out of subsidies on basic food stuffs, social security payments, health, and education. The defence budget is to be cut by US$50 million - apparently too much for Defence Minister Yitshak Rabin, who abstained from the cabinet vote on the programme. Likewise, there do not seem to be any plans to cut back on funds pouring into the settlements in the occupied territories.

The US State Department responded to Israel's plan enthusiastically, promising an emergency aid grant of US$750 million - the same amount cut from the government budget - within the next few weeks.

In the meantime, residents of Israel and the occupied territories are wondering how they will be able to make ends meet as the real value of their wages has been reduced by as much as 30 percent.

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**Palestinian Refugee women in Rafah:** *"How can we demand equality, development and peace from a society perplexed by oppression and alienation?"/UNRWA Photo*

# Palestinian Women

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In addition, seven local Palestinian women were barred from travelling to Nairobi, including Samiha Khalil, head of the al-Bireh based *In'ash al-Usra* (Family Rehabilitation Centre), who was invited by the conference planning committee and appointed as a resource person for the NGO forum.

The travel prohibitions will surely strengthen the case of Palestinian women at the conference. They intend to argue that the hardships Palestinian women face stem largely from the political reality of military occupation. These women recognise the fact that problems of inequality, sexual stereotyping and the general dilemma of women in a male-dominated society must be addressed. But it is clear from their activities and studies that they believe those problems have to be addressed within their struggle for political sovereignty, not as separate issues, and that liberation of the whole must precede liberation of the parts. The Palestinian women will use this argument if the Israeli delegation accuses them of politicising a conference dedicated to women's issues. One delegate asked, "How can we demand equality, development and peace from a society perplexed by oppression and alienation?"

The 13 Palestinian delegates will attempt to cross the bridge to Jordan and then proceed to Nairobi. They will keep a low profile, carrying copies of research papers, prepared statements and visual material, hoping that Israeli officials at the bridge will not turn them back or confiscate their material. If they are turned back, several months of hard work will go down the drain, and the meaning of such world conferences calling for freedom of movement for women will be called into question.

The Palestinian delegates were invited by the UN and private women's organisations. They got organised last November and distributed the work load among themselves. Despite confessed political differences and preoccupation with private lives, they have produced enough material to present a strong case and to kindle the interest of delegates who are unsure about their stand on the Palestinian issue.

These materials include several books: an artistically as well as literarily superb *Portrait of Palestinian Women*, a data-based analysis entitled *Palestinian Women on the Move: Activities and Organisations*, and a valuable reference book called *The Situation of Palestinian Women Under Israeli Occupation*. They also prepared pamphlets dealing with specific issues like health, education and economics. A Jerusalem advocate prepared a study on the legal situation entitled, *The Legal Status of Palestinian Women*. Other material includes slide shows, posters, and samples of embroidery and folk art.

Some of the 13 women will participate in workshops at the NGO forum designed to discuss specific issues concerning the situation of world women 10 years after the Mexico conference. Two workshops, "Women in Emergency Situation" and "Refugee Women" will specifically cover Palestinian women. Palestinian women were invited to attend these two workshops and present papers. The rest of the delegates will participate in general discussions at the NGO, learning from other world cases and discussing their own case.

Resolutions will be drafted at the workshops and general meetings to be recommended for adoptation at the governmental conference. The role of Palestinian women at the end of the NGO forum is then to lobby support for these resolutions from governmental delegations. They cannot attend the governmental conference. Instead, they wil try to present their case through the PLO delegation, which has an observer status at the UN, and other friendly delegations. The governmental conference will discuss NGO findings and resolutions and draft resolutions of its own which will be submitted for a vote of the general conference. A majority rate is enough to pass a resolution. All resolutions passed go to the UN Secretary General, who in turn will design a programme of action to implement these recommendations.

The Israeli delegates have made it clear that they will lobby for replacing the majority vote by a consensus requirement, in order to give weight to American and Israeli objections to Palestinian resolutions.

During the Copenhagen Conference in 1980, the local Palestinian delegation to the NGO was composed of only three women and had little supporting material to offer. But a strong and well-prepared PLO delegation that included veterans Leila Khalid and Issam Abd al-Hadi successfully lobbied and obtained support from virtually all Arab, Third World and Eastern Bloc countries to pass an eight-point resolution calling on world governments and organisations to provide assistance to Palestinian women in consultation and cooperation with the PLO in the form of funds, studies and research projects. The resolution recognised the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and called for the collection and dissemination of "information and data about the effect of Israeli occupation on the social and economic conditions of Palestinian women and their struggle for achieving self-determination, the right of return, and the right to national independence and sovereignty."

The resolution prompted a comprehensive 32-page study by various UN organisations on the situation of Palestinian women under occupation to be presented at the Nairobi conference. This report, to which the Israeli government has prepared a 53-page rebuttal, discusses the political as well as the socio-economic situation of women in the occupied territories and offers supporting data covering the period from 1967 to 1984. Its unfavourable conclusions will aid Palestinian delegates at the conference to expose the Israeli policies and activities in the West Bank and Gaza.

On the political situation, the report concludes: "The situation of women has been aggravated under the 1945 Defence Emergency Laws which have resulted in mass arrests, collective punishments, detentions without trial, deportation, and restriction of freedom, of association and expression." The report also found that although there is a considerable increase in female participation in the labour force, this increase is due to exploitative Israeli enterprises in the occupied territories that pay women dirt cheap wages for piecemeal work and to the absorption of several thousand Palestinian women in the Israeli economy. These women, said the report, receive a maximum of 50 percent of the wages Israeli women get for equivalent work." They are exposed to various kinds of exploitation as well as detention or interrogation, and they receive no job security, unemployment benefits or illness compensation." Furthermore, the report included evidence of the deteriorating health situation in the occupied territories including "the deterioration of mental well-being and an increase of mental diseases, particularly neuroses."

The Israeli case will be presented at Nairobi by over 180 delegates who have reportedly already left for Nairobi. It rests on two main points: first, that the situation of Palestinian women in the "administered areas" is much better than that of most women in Arab countries and second, that the Palestinian delegation should not be allowed to discuss politics at the conference, only women's issues.

The Israeli government has prepared two major studies based on the same statistical data as the Palestinian and the UN studies but drawing very different conclusions. The studies are entitled: *The Status of Arab Women in Judea, Samaria [West Bank] and the Gaza Strip*, and *Arab Women and Children Under Israeli Rule*. The reports assert that as a direct result of Israeli "administration" of the West Bank and Gaza, "Arab women are growing out of their traditional passiveness and role, they are becoming more active participants both in the sphere of family life and in the sphere of public life and engaged in activities that were traditionally closed to them before." It uses data showing that the percent of women in the labour force has increased to make its case. The report also concludes that, because of Israeli occupation, Palestinian women have obtained legal, economic and social privileges that are not enjoyed by women in any other Arab country, but the report fails to offer supporting data for this conclusion.

A Palestinian woman delegate told *Al Fajr* that if the Israeli delegation does use these arguments at the Nairobi conference, "We will be destined to win a greater victory than at Copenhagen."

The Nairobi conference will serve at best, to expose Israeli practices against Palestinian women in the West Bank and Gaza. It will also reinforce the role these women play in the struggle against Israeli occupation. Israel, the US and possibly Canada will attempt to derail these women's attempts to obtain international recognition of their plight. Western European countries are expected to support the Palestinian stand as they did during the two preparatory conferences in New York and Vienna, where they objected to US attempts to take the political aspect of the situation of Palestinian women off the Nairobi agenda.

# Israel

*Continued from page 1*

The new Israeli economic measures were received with resentment and anxiety in the occupied territories. The West Bank and Gaza Strip markets were in a state of confusion and instability. Shopkeepers either refused to sell or hiked up their prices. The moneychangers also closed their shops. The black market price of the dinar topped IS4000.

The hardest hit by these measures were workers and employees who receive salaries in Israeli shekels. Adel Ghanem, head of one of the two West Bank Federations of Workers' Unions, described the measures as "catastrophic. The worker's life will become unbearable," he said. Dr Atef Alawneh, head of the Economics Department at Najah University in Nablus, also said the measures struck residents in the occupied territories heavily.

Ghanem called on all employers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to bear part of the burden laid upon workers' shoulders. He expressed hope that the steadfastness funds would be channelled to help the working class in the occupied territories.

Dr Bakr Abu Kishik, head of the Business Department at Bir Zeit University, analysed the Israeli economy. "Successive Israeli governments tended to correct the Israeli economy by adopting superficial measures. They solely depended on assistance they received from the United States. The inflation is mainly caused by unlimited government spending on unprofitable projects such as settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli government does not dare to cut its military and settlement budgets fields because this eventually would lead to more unemployment." Abu Kishik noted that successive Israeli governments also borrowed from various countries, to the point where every newborn Israeli has to pay a debt of US$6000. Abu Kishik said that the economy of the occupied territories is directly influenced by these economic measures. This is most discernible among consumers and merchants. The cost of living escalates and work opportunities become very limited.

# Army Forbids Bank of Palestine to Issue Shares

Israeli military authorities prevented the Bank of Palestine in Gaza from selling new shares to the public July 1, on the pretext that they are illegal. The bank, the only Palestinian-owned bank in the occupied territories, was scheduled to start selling 100,000 new shares.

Israeli soldiers blocked the entrance to the bank July 1, and hung an order on the door forbidding bank owners to sell stocks, and warning residents against buying them. The Israelis want bank officials to obtain military permission to distribute the stocks in the occupied territories, in accordance with Military Order No. 705 which prevents Arab banks from selling bank shares without official permission. According to officials in the Bank of Palestine, they do not consider themselves bound by the military order.

Military orders issued by the Israeli authorities generally alter standing Jordanian laws in the Israelis' favour.

Khamis Asfour, lawyer for the Bank of Palestine, told *Al Fajr* that the decision to issue new shares came as part of the bank administration's effort to increase the bank's capita, which they decided last April to increase by US$850,000 in order to expand services and open new branches in the West Bank and Gaza. The proposed capital increase was registered with the local Israeli administered registrar. The administration then decided to issue 100,000 shares. But the Israelis blocked distribution of the shares in Gaza, Ramallah and Nablus. Asfour told *Al Fajr:* "When we contacted the Israeli legal adviser at the Gaza military governorate, Ahaz Ben Ari, to inquire about the banning order, we argued that the stocks were registered as usual. He pointed out that the Israeli registrar office accepted the increase. The legal adviser, however, insisted that the bank should obtain approval to issue new shares from the Israeli central banks' comptroller. The Bank of Palestine in Gaza submitted a written application to the Israeli Central Bank on July 2.

Hashem Ata Shawaa, director of the bank, told *Al Fajr*, "We decided to increase the capital to open branches in the West Bank and Gaza and to increase on agricultural and industrial investments. The whole issue is political," Shawaa said. "The Israeli authorities did not want us to open a bank in the occupied territories," Shawaa added.

The Israelis ordered the Bank of Palestine to deal only with Israeli currency. The bank was also forbidden to open new branches in the West Bank.

The Bank of Palestine opened in 1961. After the Israelis occupied Gaza in 1967, it was ordered closed. The bank was reopened in August, 1981, by an Israeli High Court order. "Since then," Shawaa said, "the Israelis have implemented a policy of discrimination and made our tiny mistakes look like great crimes."

Khaled Taqtash

# Out of Prison, Into Town Arrest

Two ex-prisoners freed in the May 20 prisoner exchange, Khaled Taqtash and Ahmad Ahad al-Ra'of Tahboub, were served with 20-day town arrest orders for the third time in a row July 1.

The military order, which was issued by the Israeli commander of the central region, restricts the two ex-prisoners' movement to Jerusalem where they live and prohibits them from leaving the city or changing their place of residence without prison permission. They also are forbidden to leave their homes at night, and must report daily at the Russian Compound police station in West Jerusalem. Additional measures may be taken against them, the military order stated.

In a related story, it was reported last week that the Israelis decided to renew stay permits for 29 ex-prisoners in the occupied territories who do not carry Israeli identity cards. Most of the 29 ex-prisoners were arrested before the general census was conducted following the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967.

A total of 1155 prisoners were released on May 20 in the exchange operation between Israel and the Palestine Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, 600 of whom chose to stay in Israel and the occupied territories.

# Najah University Appeals Town Arrest Orders

The administration of Najah University in Nablus petitioned the Israeli Military Objections Committee at the West Bank military governorate in Beit El June 30, for the lifting of town arrest orders imposed on 10 Najah University students. The 10 restriction orders were issued during the past three months as part of a new policy which has been adopted recently by the Israeli authorities against local education institutions.

The petition was presented by lawyer Felicia Langer of Jerusalem. Sources at Langer's office said that six out of the 10 students have been served with restriction orders which bar them from entering the university premises. Unlike other restrictions, they are allowed to travel elsewhere in the West Bank. Of the remaining four students, one is serving a town arrest in Nablus, but he is also restricted from entering the university campus. The rest were served with town arrests in their place of residence, far from Nablus.

No date has been set for the appeal hearing. Lawyers said that they expect it to take place within a month. The Israeli Military Objections Committee which is the only avenue of appeal against military orders, consists of three Israeli military officers who frequently have no legal background. The rulings of the committee, which was established by an Israeli issued military order, are not binding. They are rather, recommendations to the Israeli military governor, who can choose to accept or reject them.

The Military Objections Committee has ruled in favour of the petitioner in only one known case, that of Amal Wahdan, who was placed under town arrest last year, when she was pregnant.

According to the annual report issued by the Israeli "Civil Administration" last week, the measure is intended to replace closure orders against the universities, a collective punishment technique that the Israelis have frequently used in the past. University officials, however, charged that the measure was another form of harassment against higher education.

# Israeli Restricts PLP Spokesman

Advocate Kamel Daher, spokesman for the Progressive List for Peace (PLP), was forbidden to travel abroad for one year last week. The restriction imposed on Daher came in response to his visit to Tunis last February with other Israeli and Palestinian PLP members where they met PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat. Daher was also accused of meeting PLO representatives in Europe and arranging meetings between Palestinian officials and Israelis.

Israeli Interior Minister, Yitzhak Peretz issued the order which read: "Based on the authority assigned to me by the 1948 Emergency Regulations, I order you not to leave the country for 12 months beginning July 1." According to advocate and MK Mohammed Mi'ari, the head of the PLP, this is the first time these laws have been used to restrict movements of a Palestinian from Israel.

The minister termed Daher's travel abroad "an offence" and a "threat to Israeli security." Daher commented, "The meetings I had were political, but did not jeopardise Israeli security. On the contrary, the meetings served both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples who have rights of coexistence and mutual dialogue."

MK M'iari observed that this measure is part of a campaign against the PLP instigated by the Israeli authorities. Last month, a Knesset committee voted to lift Mi'ari's parliamentary immunity because he equated Jewish and Palestinian violence. The measure requires approval of the Knesset plenum. Knesset Speaker Shlomo Hilel postponed the vote after Mi'ari filed a petition with the Israeli High Court, on the grounds that the case is *sub judice*. The High Court has not yet issued a decision on the case.

In June 1984, the Knesset elections committee outlawed the PLP in an attempt to prevent it from running in the July elections. The High Court overruled the decision.

Mi'ari expects more harassment in the near future. He predicted that the percentage of votes necessary to obtain a Knesset seat will be increased from one to two-and-a-half in the next elections. The Israelis are also considering passing a new law prohibiting any political party or movement that does not consider Israel as an exclusively Jewish state from participating in the elections.

# Israeli Soldiers Beat Dhahriyeh Residents

Dhahriyeh residents complained last week that they had been beaten and harassed by Israeli military patrols which were on guard in the town. The reason for the harassments was unknown. A number of stone-throwing incidents have occurred in the area, Israelis claim.

Dhahriyeh sources said that since June 16, Israeli military patrols have harassed almost all residents who dared to walk in the streets after dusk. In one incident soldiers intercepted two youths named Jamal Abu Sharakh and Atiyeh al-Jabarin and beat them up severely. "They kicked, punched and struck the youths with gun butts," a source in Dhahriyeh told *Al Fajr*. Abu Sharakh reportedly vomited blood as a result of the beating. The source said that the soldiers also beat up a retarded boy in the town centre in front of many residents.

The soldiers were particularly active in the evening. They would stop a Palestinian, local residents said, confiscate his ID card and slap him several times. They would repeat the same harassment later when they came to the resident's house to return the ID card.

Dhahriyeh women also did not escape the insults and harassments of Israeli soldiers. On many occasions soldiers would stop women in the streets and ask them personal questions, or whistle at them as they passed by.

When asked whether Dhahriyeh residents had complained to the Israeli authorities about the brutal treatment, the source said they complained to the police. They did not go to the military governorate, the source explained, because they were sure that the Israeli authorities would not do anything. "After all, they are the ones who sent the soldiers," he said.

Mohammed Ali and aides outside Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock./AO Photo.

# Mohammed Ali Gets Warm Welcome at Al-Aqsa

World-famous boxer Mohammed Ali made an unexpected visit to East Jerusalem June 28 and performed the Friday prayers at al-Aqsa Mosque. Mohammed Ali, who came to the country to urge Israel to release the over 700 Lebanese Shi'ites held in Israeli jails, received a friendly welcome from Palestinian residents in Jerusalem.

His visit to al-Aqsa Mosque was organised by an *Al Fajr* journalist who happened to call him at the King David Hotel in West Jerusalem to arrange for an interview. Ali expressed his desire to pray at al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the holiest Muslim shrines in the world. Mohammed Ali was completely unfamiliar with Jerusalem, and did not know how to get to the mosque. The next day, accompanied by his business manager Jaber Mohammed, his assistant Mahdi Abawi, and Palestinian figures, Ali went to al-Aqsa Mosque to perform the prayers.

When the group arrived at St. Stevens gate, passersby shook hands with him. Inside the mosque, Ali, known among Palestinians as "the fist that is stronger than an army," also received an enthusiastic welcome. In the mosque courtyard, Palestinian photographers took many pictures of him. As he entered the mosque the sermon speaker, who was talking about the pilgrimage to Mecca which is due to start soon, interrupted his speech to welcome Ali. "Mohammed Ali is one of us. He came to pray," he told the worshippers.

After the prayer, people stood on *mastabas* (stone benches) to see Ali, the tall black boxer whom they had seen on TV so many times. Ali kept waving both his hands to people. He seemed very happy. A group of strong youths made a closed circle around him to allow safe passage through the crowds. When he arrived at the upper stair leading to the Dome of the Rock Mosque, he stood there for few moments and waved his hands again to the crowd. He hugged and kissed a child named Mohammed Salaymeh and continued his walk. He made his way out of the mosque through Bab Habs gate where a Palestinian black community lives. There Ali and his companions, crushed under the pressure of the crowd, were forced to enter a restaurant.

Moments later, Sheikh Mohammed al-Jamal — one of the top Muslim clergy men at al-Aqsa — arrived to talk with Mohammed Ali about Islam. "I did not expect this great reception," Mohammed Ali told his companions. "I received a similar reception 20 years ago," he added. The Palestinian black community invited Ali to see their club where they were celebrating a wedding.

When he reached the car that would drive him out of the Old City, Ali again waved to the onlookers, who clapped in response. He kissed a young black girl before he departed. The car moved slowly through al-Wad street and out through St. Stevens gate.

In a comment on the purpose of his trip, Ali told *Al Fajr*: "I came here to mediate the release of my brothers at Atlit prison. I do not represent any person or group." "I want to lift the spirits of Muslims in Jerusalem," he added. He said he considered his visit to be a success.

Ali left the country June 29 after midnight to rush home to see his sick mother, Odessa Clay, who had been taken to hospital in Louisville. Ali had planned to travel to Beirut and Damascus after his visit to Jerusalem to mediate the release of the Shi'ite prisoners and the American hostages.

# Spain to Establish Relations with Israel

The Spanish government will establish diplomatic relations with Israel before the end of this year, *Al Fajr* has learned from journalistic sources close to the Spanish Foreign Ministry. The Spanish Consulate in East Jerusalem has refused to comment on the subject.

*Al Fajr* was informed by reliable sources that Spain will probably establish diplomatic relations with Israel this November. Israeli officials have been actively preparing for the Spanish move. Israel's Government Press Office has arranged for senior Spanish journalists to visit Israel during the end of July. Other visits by Spanish officials and academicians are also planned late this summer.

Reliable Spanish sources have indicated three major reasons for the expected Spanish move which has been rumoured ever since the takeover of Philip Gonzalas' socialist government.

* Increased US pressure.

* Strong European pressure. Reliable sources say that Spain secretly agreed to establish relations with Israel when it was accepted as a member in the European Economic Community several months ago. The greatest pressure on Spain came from West Germany and the Scandanavian countries.

* Pressure from the Socialist International, which considers Gonzalas a star. Israeli Prime Minister Peres is also a member. The Socialist International strongly supports the Israeli prime minister and has significant influence on Gonzalas.

Spaniards have been discussing the probable impact of such a move on their relations with the Arab countries. They expect that the Arabs will initially issue land protests, but that the opposition will die down after about three months. Spaniards point to the fact that all other Western European countries have diplomatic relations with Israel without being adversely hurt by the Arabs.

One Spanish source sympathetic to Palestinians said that opposition to the Spanish move is a losing battle. The source said that some good might come out of the new relationship if the Spanish Embassy can be a channel for opposition to Israeli policy on Palestinians.

# Light Sentences for Beating Arab

Two Israeli policemen were given light sentences July 2 after they were convicted on charges of causing injury to a Palestinian resident. The internal police disciplinary court in Petah Tikva sentenced Shlomo Jalbani to one month suspended and a IS40,000 fine and Nore'il Ore'ili to 10 days in prison and a IS20,000 fine.

The two policemen physically abused Basem Ramlawi at the Russian Compound police headquarters in West Jerusalem. Ramlawi had come with his sister and sister-in-law to visit his brother, a detainee at the compound. When Ramlawi entered the office, the policemen told the two women to leave. When they refused to comply, one of the policemen pushed one of them and told her: "You are a bitch." Angered by the action Ramlawi asked "Why did you insult them?" In response, one of the policemen grabbed him by the ear, pushed him to a wooden shack in the area and beat him on different parts of the body. They inflicted a wound behind his ear which required three stitches and left a scar.

The judges accepted Ramlawi's complaint. The policemen justified their action by saying that the women were carrying two suspicious bags. They also claimed that the women misunderstood them, and that their stubborn refusal to leave the room exacerbated the incident. (Translation, Hadashot June 3, 1985).

# Gov't Teachers Protest Punitive Measures

The Regional Committee of Government Teachers in the Hebron area denounced Israeli measures against government teachers who went on strike May 22. In a meeting last week, the committee decided to submit letters of protest to the Israeli education officer.

The protests came after Israeli military authorities brought more than 60 teachers from the Hebron area before disciplinary committees in the wake of their two strikes in May demanding a 100 percent salary increase.

Meanwhile, teachers who went on strike for two class periods on May 7, sent a letter to the military education department defending the legitimacy of their strike and condemning the Israeli measures as violations of justice and educational values. The letter stated that such a short strike protesting teachers' living conditions does not deserve all these punitive measures. The letter also made it clear that teachers were careful to abide by the law and exhausted all other avenues of complaint before deciding to strike.

In their letter, teachers denounced practices of some responsible figures in the education office and some school principles as humiliating and illegal. Jordanian law, which prohibits political strikes, does not prohibit professional strikes and stipulates that responsible authorities should be informed 48 hours ahead of time [illegible] was scheduled at the same time.

# Court Acquits Ramallah Teacher

An Israeli military court in Ramallah acquitted June 30 Fadel Rimawi, an active member of the General Committee of Teachers in the West Bank, on charges of disobeying a military order on May 9.

Rimawi was summoned by the authorities on June 8 and given a written order to report to military headquarters at 3:00 pm June 9. He did not obey the order, because as a member of the mourning committee for the late mayor Karim Khalaf of Ramallah he had to attend Khalaf's commemoration, which

Rimawi was then arrested for four days and released on bail until trial. The court found him not guilty and acquitted him of the charge June 30.

The defendant's lawyers, Ibrahim Barghouti and Musa Shukri, did not rule out the possibility that the authorities wanted to press charges against Rimawi in order to fire him from his teaching post. "What deserves attention," both said," is that the general prosecuter admitted that the so-called civil administration is part and parcel of the military infrastructure in the occupied territories.

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# Towards Nairobi

**As women from all over the world head for the United Nations International Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya, Palestinian women approach the conference with mixed feelings.**

**Palestinian women who will participate in the Non-Government Organisations Forum (NGO) that precedes the main conference are disappointed with the failure of the women of the world to produce any tangible improvements in the status of Palestinian women living under Israeli occupation. The generally positive resolutions passed at the 1980 UN conference in Copenhagen did not produce any change in the occupied territories. The resolution that specifically called for improving the situation of women in the occupied territories was opposed by the US, Canada and Israel, rendering the rest of the Copenhagen resolutions virtually useless as far as Palestinian women are concerned.**

**Palestinian women are also frustrated by the fact that all their efforts in the NGOs forum have no direct bearing on the UN conference. The NGOs resolutions will only be transmitted to the main conference through lobbying government delegates. As the PLO has only observer status in the UN, Palestinians have to depend on the efforts of Arab or other representatives.**

**Palestinian women's disappointment with their fellow sisters around the world is, nevertheless, coupled with a sense of hope and expectancy that what took place in 1980 at Copenhagen and in 1975 at Mexico City will continue in the right direction.**

**Palestinian women need their sisters' help, particularly in the fields of education, health, and labour rights. They like their fellow men, also need all the suppport they can get to fight the daily violations of their basic human rights, especially freedom of expression and movement, and the right to due process of law. Active Palestinian women have been placed under town arrest orders or behind bars. Travel restrictions continue to be imposed on women – including invitees to Nairobi – who have no recourse for appeal or legal defence against such oppressive measures.**

**Finally, like their fellow men, Palestinian women look for a chance to fulfill their national aspirations of freedom, statehood and the right to return to their homes and live on their land in peace.**

**Palestinians have no government to defend them, no legal system to protect them, and no national travel documents to give them an official status as members of a state that stands behind them. Their primary recourse is to appeal to the international community and trust that it will hear them and act. This is why international conferences are of vital importance to Palestinians.**

**An international conference on women that ignores demands as basic as those listed above is not genuinely interested in improving the status of women. We hope the women at Nairobi will address these issues. If not, Palestinian women will remember the UN Decade for Women as another global initiative that gave them lip service but produced no concrete changes.**

# Objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women

(1) In 1975, International Women's Year, a World Conference was held in Mexico City which adopted the World Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, 1976-1985, and the Declaration on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace. The principles and objectives proclaimed at the Mexico City Conference for the Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, are still relevant today and constitute the basis of action for the Decade. They were further reaffirmed by a number of United Nations regional, sectoral and international meetings as well as by the social and economic recommendations of the Conference of Non-Aligned and Developing Countries on the Role of Women in Development held in Baghdad in May 1979, which were endorsed by the sixth summit of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries.

(2) Equality is here interpreted as meaning not only legal equality, the elimination of *de jure* discrimination, but also equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities for the participation of women in development, both as beneficiaries and as active agents. The issue of inequality as it affects the vast majority of women of the world is closely related to the problem of underdevelopment which exists mainly as a result of unjust international economic relations. The attainment of equality pre-supposes equality of access to resources and the power to participate equally and effectively in their allocation and in decision-making at various levels. Accordingly, it must be recognised that the attainment of equality by women long disadvantaged may demand compensatory activities to correct accumulated injustices. The joint responsibility of men and women for the welfare of the family in general and the care of their children in particular must be reaffirmed.

(3) Development is here interpreted to mean total development, including development in the political, economic, social, cultural and other dimensions of human life, as also the development of economic and other material resources and also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person. The improvement of the status of women requires action at the national and local levels and with the family. It also requires a change in the attitudes and roles of both men and women. Women's development should not only be viewed as an issue in social development but must be seen as an essential component in every dimension of development. To improve the status of women and their role in the process of development, such development must be an integral part of the global project for the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and cooperation among all states.

(4) Without peace and stability there can be no development. Peace is thus a prerequisite to development. Moreover, peace will not be lasting without development and the elimination of inequalities and discrimination at all levels. Equality of participation in the development of friendly relations and cooperation among states will contribute to the strengthening of peace, to development of women themselves and to equality of rights at all levels and in all spheres of life, as well as to the struggle to eliminate imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, Zionism, racism, racial discrimination, *apartheid*, hegemonism, and foreign occupation, domination and oppression, as well as full respect for the dignity of the peoples and their right to self-determination and independence without foreign interference or intervention and to promote guarantees of fundamental freedom and human rights. ■

*Excerpted from the resolutions passed at the UN Conference on Women in Copenhagen in 1980*

# Assistance to Palestinian Women

*Below is the text of a resolution proposed at the 1980 Copenhagen conference. The resolution was opposed by the US, Canada and Israel.*

The United Nations organisations, its specialised agencies, United Nations organs and funds, governments, international and regional intergovernmental organisations and other groups are called upon to provide assistance in consultation and cooperation with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, the representative of the Palestinian people.

(a) To undertake studies and research pertinent to the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian women with a view to identifying their specific needs and to formulate and implement relevant programmes to meet their needs and to develop resources and potentialities of women;

(b) To provide legal, humanitarian and political assistance to Palestinian women in order to allow them to exercise their human rights;

(c) To establish, expand, and diversify educational and training programmes for Palestinian women with particular emphasis on expanding technical and vocational training;

(d) To safeguard and promote the Palestinian heritage and values as the core of the educational content with a view to preserving the Palestinian national identity;

(e) To eliminate all restrictive legal and social measures that hinder Palestinian women from having access to available employment opportunities and equal pay for equal work, and to provide them with equal training and employment opportunities so that they can contribute effectively to the formation of an integrated Palestinian labour force;

(f) To assist materially and technically women's organisations and associations, and to provide support to the General Union of Palestinian Women with a view to develop their institutional capabilities to undertake extension programmes, adult education and literacy programmes for women and child care services;

(g) To formulate and implement integrated health and nutrition programmes: to train Palestinian women in the various medical and paramedical professions and to strengthen existing health services provided by the Palestinian Red Crescent, particularly those related to maternal and child care;

(h) To collect and disseminate information and data about the effect of Israeli occupation on the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian women and their struggle for achieving self-determination, right of return, and right to national independence and sovereignty ■

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

From Time Immemorial:

# A New Chapter in Zionist Mythology

Orange grove at Bir Salem, near Ramle. In 1944, this village had 315 acres of irrigated crops and 370 acres of field crops.

by Mohammed Hallaj

On October 11, 1984, the *Washington Jewish Week* published a front-page story entitled "A Journey to the Highlands." The article, written by an American Jewish couple, described a tour they had made of Israel and the Arab territories it occupied in 1967, as preparation for their intended immigration. The couple, who planned to settle in the occupied West Bank, portrayed the territory as "sparsely populated." To illustrate how misleading this statement is, the United States, to be as densely populated as the "sparsely populated" West Bank and Gaza, would need close to *two billion* inhabitants!

Blindness to the existence of Palestinian Arabs is widespread and deeply imbedded. It spans the beginning of Zionist colonisation a hundred years ago, when Israel Zangwill first gave the Zionist movement its earliest and most enduring myth about "a land without people for a people without land," until today when Joan Peters in her voluminous book, *From Time Immemorial. The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine*, assures the Zionists and their supporters that they should not feel any guilt for the dispossession and displacement of the Palestinian people.

In the years between Zangwill's slogan and Peters' book, a considerable body of Zionist mythology accumulated and became one of the most audacious attempts in modern times to suppress and distort reality.

To prove that in pursuit of their ambitions the Zionists did not victimise another people, Zionist mythmakers often went to absurd limits, evoking Shakespeare's famous remark about the lady who protests too much. David Ben-Gurion's testimony before the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), which recommended the partition of Palestine in 1947, is one such illustration. When a committee member disputed Ben-Gurion's assertion that Palestine was empty when the Jews came, and inquired about the fate and whereabouts of the non-Jewish inhabitants of the country, ancient peoples named in the Bible, Ben-Gurion daringly explained that they died. When further pressed with the question, "All of them, and their descendants, have died out?," he replied, "Yes, they disappeared."

As one Jewish writer, however, has pointed out: "There may be a people without a country, but there is no country without a people." Consequently, Zionist mythology evolved more palatable and credible versions based upon half-truths as opposed to outright fabrications. Rather than deny the existence of the Palestinians, Zionist mythology sought to diminish them quantitatively and qualitatively. Palestine became a "depopulated" or "sparsely populated" and "neglected" land. "What are Palestinians?," a former Israeli prime minister, Levi Eshkol, angrily responded to an American journalist who asked him about Israel's position on Palestinian rights. "When I came here, he continued, "there were 250,000 non-Jews — mainly Arabs and Beduins. It was desert, more than underdeveloped. Nothing." Menachem Begin's mentor, Vladimir Jabotinsky, described the Palestinians as a "yelling rabble dressed up in gaudy, savage rags." Ber Borochov, an influential early Zionist theoretician, said the Palestinians "lacked any culture of their own and did not have any outstanding national characteristics."

This mythology is not only intended for public relations purposes, it is also intended to make generations of Israeli Jews more adamant in their rejection of Palestinian rights and to prevent them from being guilty about it. The Israeli daily, *HaAretz*, reported on September 9, 1974, that the Israeli minister of education told Israeli school teachers: "It is important that our youth should know that when we returned to this country we did not find any other nation here and certainly no nation which had lived here for hundreds of years." He continued to explain that the Arabs whom they had encountered were only Egyptian refugees who had arrived in the middle of the 19th century. Another writer, who observed that Israeli school children are taught that "nothing has happened in Palestine from the last revolt of Bar Kochba in the first century...until Herzl and the birth of Zionism," concluded that "this refusal to admit the existence of anything which is not Jewish in Israel is characteristic of the Zionist spirit."

This is more than propoganda or simply bad history; it is a prescription for violence because it demonises and demoralises a people. Pinhas Lavon, who became Israel's defence minister, could not understand why some people were "upset" about "a particularly brutal" Israeli attack on an Arab village in which homes were dynamited. Said Lavon: "There's no need to get upset — there was no fine mahogany furniture in the village."

This unremitting campaign to dispossess and displace the Palestinian people is meant to minimise the cruelty involved in the transformation of Palestine into Israel. Joan Peter's book, *From Time Immemorial*, fits snugly within this deeply rooted Zionist mythology, as do racist novels by Zionist storytellers, such as Leon Uris, who depict Palestinians as a sub-human species without brains, feelings or honour.

On its dust jacket, *From Time Immemorial* advertises that it "will forever change the terms of the debate about the conflicting claims of the Arabs and the Jews in the Middle East." And how does Ms. Peters bring about this fateful change? By writing a Zionist *summa theologica*, a compilation of what Noam Chomsky calls "received doctrine," the corpus of Zionist myths about the Arab-Zionist conflict over the fate of Palestine. Despite her frequent allusions to new and startling discoveries, Peters discovered very little. What her seven years of research did produce was the gathering and resurrecting of myths which had been the backbone of the Zionist case since the beginning of the century.

Those who follow Zionist literature will recognise the refrains: Arab opposition to Zionism is an Arab version of anti-Semitism, rooted in Islamic intolerance; the Palestinians became homeless refugees because their leaders ordered them to leave their country; the number of refugees is inflated; the refugees are used by the Arabs as a political football; their eviction from Palestine ought to be seen as a reasonable population exchange with Jewish refugees from Arab countries; Zionist colonisation in Palestine brought great benefits to the country and surrounding areas; and the Palestinians are a fictious people. These are the new "facts and conclusions" that Peters claims to have unearthed; they are, in fact, but a rerun of previous Zionist performances. Consider, for example, the book, *Battleground: Fact and Fantasy in Palestine*, written eleven years earlier by Samuel Katz. A long-time associate of Menachem Begin in his terrorist Irgun days, Katz readily acknowledges that his work, which advances the same views expressed by Ms. Peters, merely "brought together" previously existing "knowledge" on the Arab-Israeli conflict. And Begin himself, in a "Foreword" to the second edition (1977), said of Katz's book what some reviewers now say of the Peters' book:

> . . .the book blows away just about all the myths and fantasies that have been disseminated about the conflict over Palestine. To most people *Battleground* surely comes as an eye-opener. I know that even the most knowledgeable people have derived from this book new perceptions — not to mention knowledge — on Jewish history, on the history of Palestine, and on the Arabs. The chapter on the crucial subject of the "Arab refugees" is a good example. It is an exciting build-up, brick by brick, document by document, of the truth that the basic Arab claim of "a people driven from their homeland" is a hoax. Almost all the facts are available to any student. In *Battleground* they are brought together; and it is clear at once that our case is an unanswerable one.

There is, it would appear, nothing new under the Zionist sun.

Why do Zionists feel compelled to treat the reading public to periodic reruns of their familiar mythology on the Arab-Israeli conflict? The author of *From Time Immemorial* alleges that the Arabs "have flooded the communications media of the world in a subtle and adroit utilisation of the art of professional public relations." In his "Foreword" to the 1977 edition of *Battleground*, Begin similarly blames "the heavy weight of heavily financed and admittedly efficient Arab propaganda" for the world's ignorance of the facts of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Katz himself asserts that lying is an Arab trait and that "falsifying history" is an "Arab art."

The Arab's incompetence in the areas of propaganda and public relations are legendary and universally conceded. American journalists who cover the Middle East attribute the prevalence of pro-Israeli and Zionist views in the American media primarily to Arab shortcomings in presenting their case. To attribute understanding of and sympathy for the Palestinian cause to the efficiency of Arab propoganda is totally unconvincing. In fact, until the 1970s the Arab side of the story on the Arab-Israeli conflict in general and the Palestine question in particular was totally unfamiliar and inaccessible to world public opinion. The Zionist version of reality enjoyed complete monopoly in books and periodicals, in motion pictures and on the air waves.

Israel's behaviour has made it increasingly difficult for it to wear the mask designed for it by Zionist mythology. Its dealings with the Palestinians, its growing militarism, its emergence as a principal arms merchant and supporter of authoritarian regimes around the world, its relentless oppression and dispossession of the Palestinians under its occupation, its militant behaviour in Lebanon showed it increasingly to be the "savage state" that Moshe Sharett spoke about. Support for Israel became increasingly burdensome to the Jewish conscience, and Zionist publicists needed not only to provide Israel and Zionism with a face-lift for the sake of world opinion, but also to reenforce endangered solidarity from the Jewish people themselves.

These are the reasons for the cyclical efforts to revive Zionist myths about the Arab-Jewish conflict over Palestine. It is not Arab competence in the field of public relations which makes books such as *From Time Immemorial* necessary, but the fact that Zionist behaviour dooms Zionist mythology to carry within it the seeds of its own destruction, which requires periodic transfusions to keep it alive. ■

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Released prisoners going through Red Cross name checks.

# Life After Prison

by Awad Abdel Fattah

Of the 1150 Palestinian prisoners who were released in the prisoner exchange deal between Israel and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command last May 20, 37 are from within the 1948 borders of Israel and they have Israeli citizenship. In Israeli eyes, they are considered traitors to the state of Israel rather than external enemies, and this is what puts them in a special situation which differs from that of the rest of the Palestinian prisoners released in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and elsewhere.

Shortly after their release, these 37 prisoners were all summoned to police stations and warned by top intelligence officials against getting involved in Palestinian nationalist political activity. They were also forbidden to leave the country for one year. Ex-prisoners who are university graduates or students were informed that they would not be allowed to resume their studies and work in their field for the next few years.

Only a few ex-prisoners agreed to talk to *Al Fajr*. Some were hesitant for security reasons. doesn't mean that they have changed their stands and beliefs on the "necessity of fighting the Zionist

However, their personal futures are still vague. Most of them still don't know how to start their new lives and to rehabilitate themselves, especially in light of restrictions on their movement and activity. As an initial step, the Nazareth-based Prisoners Friends Society has dispensed grants to all 37 for daily expenses.

## Expression of Anger, No Intent to Harm

Fathi Khalil, 38, from Tura'an village in the Galilee, was a fourth year student at Hebrew University when he was arrested in 1969. He served 16 years of his 28 year sentence which he received for placing an explosives charge in the university cafeteria. Khalil felt it was very important to explain the reasons why he and his comrades had carried out a military action in the university. "I know," he began, "that academics and intellectuals view this as an uncivilised action, but you and others must understand what the situation was like in Hebrew University at that time." Khalil said that he hadn't intended to kill or injure anybody, and that he will never want to do that.

Until 1967, like most Arab students in Israeli universities and the Palestinians in general, Fathi was overwhelmed by the pan-Arab nationalist feeling which was generated by the late Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasser. "Therefore," Khalil said, "Israel's defeat of the three Arab armies – including Nasser's – came as a great shock in 1967." The defeat produced pronounced feelings of superiority and contempt among Israeli university students towards Arabs in general and Arab students in particular. The clout of extreme right-wing Jewish students grew and violent clashes with Arab students increased. Arab students felt increasingly alienated. After two years of Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Israelis suppressed a number of student demonstrations throughout the occupied territories with brute force ending in the wounding of 63 students. "Even this painful and unprecedented incident," said Khalil, "didn't mobilise the Israeli students, and many of them even expressed open support for this tragedy." He believed that because the events concerned fellow students, national identity should not have played a role in the Israeli students' stand, and that they should have protested the oppressive measures.

He also pointed out that "the operation was done as a protest and an expression of

## Growing Up in Prison

Munir Mansour, 29, from the village Majd al-Krum in the Acre district, served 11 years of his 20 year term in jail. He was first imprisoned for two months in 1971 when he was only 15, on charges of crossing the Lebanese border illegally. Mansour recalled some incidents that affected his nationalist feelings. In 1970, he was suspended from school because he wrote a composition about his two cousins who were killed during a military operation inside Israel. In 1973, he again crossed into Lebanon and returned to Israel with a group to carry out a military operation, but he was captured. Like most of the prisoners, Mansour developed both politically and ideologically in prison. "The fact that I was young," he said, "did not break me. I continued to develop my political and ideological views and learned to be steadfast in the face of the tensions and pressures of detention." He added, "Therefore I will easily survive all the problems I face now, like adjusting to my new life." Also like the rest of the prisoners, Mansour was surprised by the popular welcome which he received in his village upon his return. He pointed out that this reflects the growing national consciousness of the Palestinians inside Israel.

## 'Over My Dead Body'

"You will complete your studies only over my dead body," an intelligence officer told Nazareth resident Walid Shehadeh a week after his release. The officer also told Shehadeh that he would not permit him to work in his field or travel abroad for one year. Shehadeh, 31, now lives with his parents. He was sentenced to 20 years in 1979 on charges of receiving military training from Palestinian organisations in Arab countries, and planning military operations. Shehadeh was one of the leading members of the progressive national movement, a radical Palestinian student organisation at Hebrew University.

Among other things, Shehadeh talked about the suffering parents and family members go through when and after their son or daughter is imprisoned. "The parents' primary concern becomes the issue of the prisoners." He added that not only does the prisoner's life change, so does his or her parents'. Parents have to pay regular visits to their child and run here and there when problems between prisoners and prison authorities arise. Both of Shehadeh's parents died while he was in prison, but he was not allowed to attend their funerals.

But his main concern at present is no different from that of the other released prisoners. He is channelling all his energy into building a new life. ■

Palestinian prisoners on their way home.

Below are two interviews with Palestinians who are directly involved in different ways with the Jordanian-Palestinian peace initiative that originated with the February 11 Amman Agreement between PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and Jordan's King Hussein. *Al Fajr's* **Ghassan Bishara** interviewed **Rashid Khalidi**, one of the Palestinians whose name has appeared in the press as a potential delegate in a joint Palestinian-Jordanian negotiating team. An American journalist in Amman interviewed **Mohammed Milhem**, deported mayor of Halhoul and member of the PLO's Executive Committee.

# *Khalidi:*

## *'Very Modest Expectations'*

*Rashid Khalidi is one of five Palestinian professors* whose names have been mentioned as possible delegates in a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that will meet with US officials to discuss peace in the Middle East. Khalidi, a graduate of Yale and Oxford universities, is presently working on a book about the PLO and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and will be teaching next year at Columbia University in New York City. Khalidi taught at the American University of Beirut until 1983 when he came to Georgetown University in Washington DC for a year.* **Ghassan Bishara**, *Al Fajr's Washington DC correspondent interviewed Khalidi June 14 concerning his alleged role in the delegation, the future of these negotiations, and the peace process as a whole.*

**Q: You were mentioned in the Israeli, American and Arab press as a candidate for the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation proposed to meet US officials to discuss future peace negotiations with Israel, in the context of the Amman agreement between PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and Jordan's King Hussein. Have you been approached by any of the above parties to play that role?**

**A:** No. The first time I heard of this subject was on the news last week, and I have no idea how my name got onto [this list].

**Q. What do you think of the proposed talks, ignoring for now their potential success or failure?**

**A:** I think if there is a serious intention to deal with the issue of peace, then there should be a direct approach to the representative of the central party to the dispute — the Palestinian people. Its representative is the PLO. The PLO should be directly involved on the basis of equality. Anything which does not lead to that can only have tactical significance. I don't think that either

> "I DON'T THINK ANYONE WOULD PLAY ANY REPRESENTATIVE ROLE EXCEPT BY APPOINTMENT OF THE PLO."

the Reagan Administration or the Israelis are seriously interested in dealing with the root of this problem and, therefore, in dealing with the PLO.

**Q: Are you personally dissatisfied with the idea that certain Palestinian academicians, mayors or others, be appointed by the PLO to play the role that you think the PLO should play itself?**

**A:** Anyone who believes himself to be Palestinian and accepts Palestinian national aspirations for self-determination, for statehood, and for the right of return, would, I think, only accept to play any role on the basis of direct appointment or commission by the PLO. I don't think anyone would do anything or play any representative role except by appointment of the PLO.

**Q: If you think it is important to achieve those basic demands, and if you think that it is necessary to talk to the US in order to do so, what would you do if the US refuses to talk with the PLO?**

**A:** I think that one has to distinguish [between things]. I don't think it would be a negligible achievement if the US would deal with the PLO, would support the idea of self-determination, the right of return and would stop opposing statehood. I do not think that this is currently realisable. In principle, I don't think it is a mistake to try to achieve all of this, but I think one has to be realistic about the possibilities of doing so. I personally believe it would be very, very difficult — in fact, I would say it's very unlikely that American acceptance [of those basic demands] could be achieved. That is only one level. The other level is Israel. Dealing or not dealing with the US is ultimately a first step; you still have not approached [the question of] how to deal with Israel.

With regard to Israel, are you trying to appeal to Israeli public opinion or are you trying to force Israel to do something? Are you trying to reach them through the US? Is that possible? I have grave doubts about the idea that the way to deal with Israel is through the US. If our objective is to force the US [so that it may force Israel] to accept these demands, I don't think that strategy will work. If the objective is tactical, meaning it would put the US in the position that it might accept some of these demands, then it might be possible to achieve a tactical success. But even there I am sceptical.

**Q. Assuming from what you just said, now that you are approached by the PLO to play a role in such a delegation, what will your response be?**

**A:** I think it is an academic, as well as a hypothetical question, since I have not been asked. I will, in addition, take refuge from answering by saying that I doubt that the US will make the kind of moves in response to the Palestinian-Jordanian initiative which would be necessary to make this a serious proposition. In other words, I doubt that the US can even accept the principle of self-determination, which seems to me to be the pre-condition for such a dialogue, and if the US doesn't recognise us as a people represented by the PLO, with the right to self-determination, then there can be no basis for a dialogue. I don't think I am going to be asked to participate because I don't think we are going to get there. If the US accepts our people and our right to be represented by the PLO, or by whoever the PLO Executive Committee Chairman chooses, then it would be an achievement. I don't think that it would necessarily mean that we could then move to an international conference and achieve a Palestinian state. In conclusion, the question is a hypothetical one.

**Q. Do you believe the American government is willing to do what is necessary if such talks are to begin and succeed, considering the political reality here in the US?**

**A:** No. Among experts, there is a growing realisation that what the Palestinians have been saying is true. They are a people and there can be no peace in the region without the PLO, or without a Palestinian state. Politically, that is not the reality in the US. In public opinion and especially in political terms, in that very specialised, isolated, insulated arena which is the US legislature, the opposite is true. On Capital Hill, where money is appropriated and a very large element of US Middle East policy is made, the Palestinians do not exist. What exists essentially is Israel's view of reality. We have not affected

**British Policy towards Syria & Palestine 1906-1914**

*a study of the antecedents of the Hussein – McMahon correspondence, the Sykes – Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration*

Rashid Ismail Khalidi

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The cover of one of Khalidi's publications.

that in the least bit. The impact we have had has been on [all kinds] of experts and on a certain element of public opinion — a certain element. But as far as the political process in this country is concerned, the domestic political process which ultimately determines foreign policy... we have had no effect. It is absolutely out of the question that the kind of things we are talking about could be achieved.

**Q: King Hussein's visit to Washington last month seems to have changed US views about the Amman agreement. In your estimation, what brought about the change?**

**A:** I am not sure. All we know is what the King said publicly which, in fact, is only a reaffirmation of an old PLO position. There are PNC resolutions that refer to accepting all UN resolutions and the idea of a conference in an international framework which the PLO accepts. So it seems to me that there is nothing new or different about what the PLO and Jordan are saying. What seems to have changed, if anything, is what the Americans are hearing. I don't understand why, but I think it should be pointed out that it is only being heard on one level, by experts, and maybe not even by all the experts.

People seem to think that if State Department officers are convinced of something, it will become policy. That is not the case. What the president says and does, and what American policy ultimately becomes, is determined at least as much by the way in which Congress reacts. The reaction in the political arena and in Congress has not been positive... They heard what King Hussein said as meaning direct negotiations. I don't think that the PLO accepts the concept of direct negotiations. I don't think the Jordanians understand things in terms of direct negotiations. What the Palestinians are talking about is negotiations within the framework of an international conference, and I think that is what the Jordanians are talking about as well. Yes to negotiations, but within this context and not only on the basis of 242 and 338, but also on the basis of other UN resolutions that give the PLO the position of equality at the table and accept the principle of self-determination. I really don't think that this was understood in Washington.

**Q: Do you think that Israel can be persuaded to negotiate on the basis of the February 11 Amman agreement, considering the political reality in Israel?**

**A:** No.

*Continued on page 15*

**Where Will it Lead?**

# The Meaning of the Amman Agreement

Milhem

*I first met Mohammed Milhem in 1979, when he was still the mayor of Halhoul. He was strikingly handsome. He spoke English with chiseled, deliberate phrasing, and carried himself with a straightness that might have made others less certain of their purpose in life envious. In another man this posture could have been arrogance, yet Milhem had a reputation for having not only his people's confidence, but also their affection.*

*Deportation in 1980 tore him from his roots. In Amman he lives surrounded by his family, a bulwark in his exile. His apartment is no more pretentious than his house in Halhoul. The living-dining area where we sit has old stuffed sofas and chairs, a couple of somewhat faded oriental rugs. A vase of artificial flowers stands on one end table.*

*Downstairs a guard sits posted. A portable phone by Milhem's side is constantly ringing; there is a beeper on the coffee table in front of him. He is continuously on the alert — listening, pacing with the phone whenever he answers it. One does not forget that his predecessor in the job he now holds — the PLO Executive Committee member in charge of funds for the occupied territories and higher education — was Fahd Qawasmi.*

*The past five years have left their marks. Now he looks all of his 56 years. His voice is heavy, his eyes tired. As he speaks he keeps blowing his nose, twisting at one cheek in a nervous gesture I hadn't remembered. And yet when he begins to talk, he marshals his forces with discipline. The old air of persuasive reason is there, the deliberate phrasing the same, the characteristic interjections of "you see," the repetition of certain words and phrases that mark the natural orator.*

**Q: One criticism that's been made of the PLO by people sympathetic to its aims, is that it has concentrated too much on organising outside of the occupied territories. Could you comment on this?**

**A:** That was part of my criticism even before I was expelled. The PLO is criticised. But to be critical is one thing, to split is to damage the whole thing. To criticise is one thing but to stay away is keeping from one's duties. We should translate our minds and bodies from a stage of criticising to a stage of correcting.

Let's go into the agreement. I started telling you that the last two PNCs, at least, adopted the concept of confederation. This concept translates into the following formula: The PLO speaks for the Palestinians, the Palestinian state will be established, and the concept of confederation with Jordan is accepted. We have been talking at the last three PNC meetings about the distinguished relations between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. The PNC held in Amman had a quorum, which is well-known. The resolutions of the PNC were almost a copy of the 16th PNC held in Algiers, that's number two. Number three: the new Executive Committee fixed certain principles for any peaceful solution. Land for peace, self-determination for Palestinians, international conference, PLO self-representation, the rights of refugees. Five main principles. These are the principles adopted by the PLO Executive Committee.

**Q: There was an analysis in an article in *Middle East International* which said that the framework of cooperation agreed upon by Chairman Arafat and King Hussein is the most important change in PLO policy since the National Charter was amended. It says that it's not mentioned in so many words, but whereas the PLO charter in 1968 declared that armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine, the 1985 document turns away from "the armed struggle not by renouncing it but by simply making no mention of it." The new emphasis is on negotiations. Then he goes on to say the Amman agreement underscored this assumption of the PNC. Is that an accurate assessment?**

**A:** There have been different PNC meetings since 1968 and they have adopted new proposals, but they have not dropped the military solution. Nobody has ruled out the military struggle. No PNC ruled it out. But in the accord with Jordan it speaks of an international conference. An international conference is accepted by the Palestinians and by

> "I NEVER DECEIVED MYSELF THAT WITH THE ACCORD WE ARE GOING TO GET A STATE OR SELF-DETERMINATION."

all the Arabs. The international conference is supposed to talk about political solutions, not about military solutions.

The agreement with Jordan is one thing, and the PLO resolutions are something else. We have resolutions. We cannot impose them on the Jordanians. With Jordan we are speaking of an international conference,. United Nations, and the international legitimate ways of finding a solution. We are not speaking about Palestinian ways of achieving a solution. It is completely different. We cannot impose on the Jordanians or on the Arabs in their summits certain proposals that we in the PLO adopt. The armed struggle is one of the options that the PLO still sticks to, armed resistance. And you know, that is still going on. With all possible means. But in the accord, the channel for a peaceful solution doesn't cancel out the other channels. This is a channel between the PLO and Jordan.

Now, if you ask Chairman Arafat or anyone else, "Do you think this accord will bring real justice and peace? Do you think the US and Israel, whose presence is very important, will be attending?" I, Chairman Arafat, everybody thinks that this accord only helps bring about an understanding and helps us to be here close to Jerusalem, you see. But it doesn't mean that we are going to get justice and peace out of it.

**Q: You mean it gives you space to manoeuvre?**

**A:** Yes. That's all. I never deceived myself, nor did Arafat ever deceive himself, that with this accord we are going to get a state, that we are going to get self-determination. No, no, no, no.

**Q: What do you think you can get out of this at this point?**

**A:** I can get only good relations with the Jordanians and the people of Jordan, to justify my presence here, very logically, very reasonably, in a very coordinated way where I can be among people very close to the occupied territories.

**Q: My sense from our conversation is that the Amman agreement was a last-ditch effort to salvage what the PLO mainstream could for itself out of the wreckage of Lebanon —**

**A:** Yes, yes.

**Q: And that, in a sense, the Amman agreement was born out of desperation and a position of weakness, not strength.**

**A:** I tell you, the PLO has come out of a fierce battle in Lebanon, but they continue to survive it. The worst came later. The worse was not the Israeli invasion. The worst was that what the Israeli invasion of Lebanon failed to achieve, was intended to be achieved by different moves. What were they? Not to allow the PLO institutions to have blood or life. For example, the problem of a quorum for the Executive Committee — there should be nine members attending. The ninth member was in Damascus. He succeeded once to get to Tunis. And there was a quorum. And then he went back to his home in Damascus and the Syrians told him, "This is the last time you'll leave. You are not allowed to leave." [For the Executive Committee to be effective,] you need decisions for this and for that, [there was no quorum] so there was complete paralysis. Now if there is paralysis within the PLO institutions, this paralysis may end in the death of the PLO. So I feel, I personally feel that what the invasion has failed to achieve was... achieved by splits among the Palestinians, by fights among them and by making the different institutions of the PLO such as the PNC Executive Committee become so paralysed that we end up in the death of the PLO. So the Amman PNC meeting was a revival when we were on the verge of death. And the new Executive Committee, I think, was much more homogeneous and to the point, ...You know something? The previous Executive Committees, I've been told, and I saw some of them, were quarrelling most of the times.

**Q: What did you think of Peres' response to Hussein's peace plan?**

**A:** Peres said that he believed that there should be negotiations with Israel first, attended by Palestinians from the occupied territories without PLO representation, at least in the first two or three stages, and no Palestinian state... he said so many stupid things. He has basically only reiterated the former Israeli position. Yes. He proved that there is no difference between Labour and Likud, and that the Israelis are not for peace and will never be for peace.

**Q: I understand the position is that Chairman Arafat under the Amman**

*Continued on page 13*

**AMMAN AGREEMENT**

1. **The concept of land in exchange for peace, as detailed in UN resolutions. The right of self-determination for the Arab Palestinian people, including the right to set up an independent state.**
2. **The establishment of confederation between Jordan and Palestine following the Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories.**
3. **Solving the Palestinian problem from all aspects.**
4. **Palestinian refugee problem to be solved in accordance with UN resolutions.**
5. **The call for an international conference to include the five permanent members of the security council and all concerned sides in the Middle East issue, including a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation.**

* The other four Palestinian professors mentioned in the American, Israeli and Arab press are: Hisham Sharabi of Georgetown University, Walid Khalidi of Harvard University, Edward Said of Columbia University and Ibrahim Abu-Lughud of Northwestern University.]

by Michael Lowry

*Dolores Green-Shwartz returned home late one night to find her freezer door torn off its hinges. The frozen chicken she had bought that afternoon had been brutally mutilated and strewn across the kitchen floor. Entering her bedroom, Dolores discovered that her drawers had been ransacked and her mattress ripped to shreds. And what was even stranger, the loose floor tiles she had been meaning to fix had been ripped off the floor.*

*Now for the life of her, Dolores couldn't imagine why her home had been vandalised in such a manner. The next morning, when the police arrived on the scene, she told them so, but they looked at her as though she was daft. "They were after your dollars," said one of the detectives matter-of-factly.*

*Dolores Green-Shwartz burst out laughing, but her laughter soon gave way to despair. "Christopher Columbus discovered America" she pondered to herself, "and that's why we have dollars. Simcha Ehrlich, Yoram Aridor and Yitzhak Moda'i have made the shekel worth less than the paper it's printed on, and that's why everyone in Israel is rushing to buy dollars."*

*Being an enterprising woman, Dolores heard opportunity knock. She visited all her friends and relatives and inquired where they stashed their dollars. Of course, no one she spoke to had dollars to hide, but everyone knew where their friends stashed theirs.*

*A few months later, Dolores Green-Shwartz published a book entitled,* 101 Places to Stash Your Dollars. *It quickly climbed to the top of the bestseller list and Dolores raked in her royalties, which she of course used to buy dollars and stash them in the 102nd place she hadn't told anybody about.* (Condensed version of a story which first appeared in Dan Margalit's June 14 column in *HaAretz*. In Israel, one cannot deposit dollars in the bank, which is why Israelis hide them in their homes.)

West Jerusalem's poor demonstrate on their way to the Knesset, demanding cheaper food prices and help from the government, and protesting against the funding of West Bank settlements./RI Photo.

## Dollar Stashing and Military Adventurism

# The Roots of Israel's Economic Woes

### The Switzerland of the Middle East

When Menachem Begin's Likud government came to office in 1977, it inherited a troubled economy with a 50 percent annual rate of inflation. After soliciting the advice of *laissez-faire* economist Milton Friedman, Simcha Ehrlich — the first of Begin's four finance ministers — unveiled the Likud's plan to liberalise the Israeli economy. Overnight, scores of economic restrictions were lifted as Ehrlich joyfully announced that Israel was on its way to becoming "the Switzerland of the Middle East." It was only a matter of time, he said, until capital began streaming into the country and the populace began reaping the dividends of a thriving free market economy.

Of course, in retrospect, Ehrlich was right about one thing: capital did in fact begin to flow, but rather than stream *into* Israel, it streamed *out*. But the Likud government did not seem to be overly perturbed. Economist Meir Merhav explains why: "Inflation primarily benefits property owners. In other countries with high inflation, that always meant owners of real property, land, factories, gold, goods and the like. In the indexation system that Israel has developed to perfection, owners of financial assets of paper property also benefit. And since the Israeli economy has always depended heavily on an influx of capital from abroad — in the form of unrequited transfers and, in the last decade, of mounting foreign debt — the profits from inflation were not only made by one class at the expense of another, but mainly at the expense of more and more foreign indebtedness. This has made it largely possible to avoid open social conflict over the distribution of income and wealth. To the extent that such conflict threatened to erupt, it was shunted into a visceral formless resentment against 'the establishment' combined with chauvinistic ideology and the opium of messianic delusions."

(Meir Merhav, *The Jerusalem Post*, May 24, 1985).

By 1979, Ehrlich had been shunted out of the Ministry of Finance to make way for Yigal Hurwitz, a hard-nosed monetarist who took office announcing that he "was out for a pound of flesh." Overnight, government subsidies were slashed by as much as 50 percent, precipitating a wave of food riots throughout the poor neighbourhoods of Israel.

Indeed, it does not seem unfair to say that Hurwitz enjoyed aggravating the social misery of the Israeli underclass. But his Likud cohorts, realising that Hurwitz's monetarism would not win an election, replaced him in 1980 with Yoram Aridor who, in the months leading up to the 1981 elections, began cutting back import restrictions, thereby flooding the market with cheap luxury goods.

Aridor's ploy worked and the Likud was reelected. Within a year, the government launched a "48 hour war" that lasted for three years and among other things, went a long way to destroying Israel's already ailing economy.

By the summer of 1984, inflation had reached the 1000 percent mark; prices were no longer marked on commodities, because they changed from one day to the next. Israelis began flocking to the black market to trade their worthless shekels for dollars. And the war, which was eating up over a million dollars a day, dragged into its third year.

### Something Must Be Done

The indecisive 1984 election results and the growing perception that Israel was on the verge of economic ruin, worked to foster an atmosphere of emergency. The two large parties banded together in a national unity government, whose principal mission was to correct the country's dire economic situation.

And yet, although both parties' electoral campaign had revolved around a program of economic salvation (which they did not disclose to the electorate), it soon became apparent that the national unity government hadn't a clue about how to deal with Israel's hyperinflation. They bumbled along, issuing decrees and adopting partial measures, until finally, in November 1984, a wage and price freeze agreement was negotiated between the government, the Histadrut Labour Federation and the industrialists association. The "package deal agreement" did actually work to stabilise prices, but inflation continued unabated. When the agreement expired in February 1985, a second package deal was drawn up, but it proved much less successful than its predecessor. The industrialists began to drive up the cost of commodities and, as a result, the wages of the working population began to fall in value. By June 1985, the country was hit by a wave of labour unrest. The package deal was crumbling and the newspapers ran daily editorials on the order of — "Something must be done." But as to what that something was, or is, few were prepared to say outright.

### Why the Package Deal Failed

Most Israeli economists are agreed: Israel's inflation is being aggravated by excessive government spending. If inflation is to be nipped in the bud, the government must make drastic cuts in its budget. Moreover, the International Monetary Fund and the US State Department are of the same opinion.

But up till now, the country's military establishment has managed to preserve its lion's share of the Israeli budget — approximately 40 percent last tolled. And this brings us to the problem with the package deal agreement, namely, that the army was not made a partner to the agreement. For only by reducing military spending and cutting off the funds pouring into the settlements in the occupied territories, can Israel hope to reduce the level of inflation. However, that entails a radical change of policy, one which does not seem to be in the cards in the immediate future.

### Back to the Drawing Board

At the present juncture (July 1985), Hurwitz's monetarist programme seems to have gained the support of most Likud members and industrialists. Why decrease military spending when you can cut health, welfare and education spending? Moreover, by slashing back government subsidies on basic commodities and driving up the rate of unemployment, the workers will be so frightened of losing their jobs that they will have little choice but to accept lower wages and increase their productivity, thereby bolstering the profits of the industrialists.

But the Labour Party, which controls the Histadrut Labour Federation, realises that if such a policy is to be instituted, the Histadrut must either sell the workers down the river, or fight it tooth and nail. The days when the Israeli populace could easily be convinced that they had to tighten their belts for the sake of 'security' are long past.

Hence, the present stalemate. In his newfound role as the Great Conciliator — the man holding out for reasoned compromise — Prime Minister Peres is testing the water: how far can the Histadrut be compromised before it totally loses its legitimacy in the eyes of the workers and wildcat strikes begin to break out all over the country?

For the meantime at least, Israel seems prepared to continue to allow its state and market economy to be appendaged to an army rather than the other way around. According to newspaper reports from the end of June, when Peres broached the idea of cutting the defence budget, US Secretary of State George Shultz was shocked to the quick and the idea was quickly scratched. Shultz has been calling on Israel to implement a form of Reaganomics (ie. an economic policy whereby the poor subsidise the rich) for the the past year, and by the end of June 1985, everything pointed to such a policy being adopted...bit by bit.

The only stumbling block is the Labour Party's concern that such a move would deflect voters to the right and the left, and ruin its chances of winning an election. All the same, the government is under pressure to act. The national unity government, which was formed exclusively to deal with the country's economic emergency, has so far failed in its mission. But as to how long this situation will continue — that's anybody's guess. As the months go by, the wages of the working population of the country are becoming worth less and less. The Israeli tax system has been eroded to the point that only salaried employees are paying tax; the industrialists pay next to nothing, and want to pay even less. Likewise, Israel has no capital gains tax, and there are no plans to institute such a tax.

Right now, the question being asked is, how far can Peres push Israel Kessar, the secretary of the Histadrut? The summer of 1985 should provide an answer.

Journalist Nabhan Khreisheh

# The Private Toll of Town Arrest

by Said al-Ghazali

Perhaps personal and voluntary confinement is the mother of invention. It urges one to read, write, think and create. This is not true if the confinement is compulsory. A person who is placed under town arrest becomes isolated, restricted within time and place limits in a town or a village. It becomes almost impossible to keep in touch with friends and relatives outside the boundaries of the place of confinement. The future is also uncertain. The town arrestee does not know whether the restriction order will be renewed or cancelled at the end of the term.

Nabhan Khreisheh, a journalist at *Al Fajr* Arabic newspaper, has been living in his village, Zanabeh (pop. 4000), in the Tulkarm district since October 1982. Khreisheh was never officially notified of the so-called "serious security reasons" which motivated Israeli officials to serve him with six successive town arrest orders. The Israeli military commander of the West Bank, Amnon Shakah, believes that Khreisheh is a PLO activist. He also believes that Khreisheh would influence public opinion in the West Bank if he were free to move about as he wished.

> THEY PREVENTED ME FROM GOING TO TULKARM DAILY FOR THREE MONTHS LEST I GO TO THE PRESS OFFICE.

Khreisheh, who is a graduate in Middle East Studies from Bir Zeit University, explained his theory about "their considerations for putting a person under the sword of the town arrest restriction." He said, "The authorities use this weapon for punitive reasons." Khreisheh, who spent five years in Israeli jails on political charges, did not spend any time in his village for 10 years from 1972-1982. "You can imagine the extent of damage which has been inflicted on me," he told the group of five Palestinian journalists who visited him two weeks ago.

Khreisheh now lives with his family and spends most of his time reading "political books and periodicals." He sometimes helps his family to farm their four-dunum-plot in the village. "The only choice I had was to build new relations from the beginning," he said. "Some people in the village do not like to maintain relations with me. One person in Tulkarm asked me politely not to enter his shop again," Khreisheh explained sadly.

However, Khreisheh did not despair. He decided to get married in February 1983. The Israelis gave him only a four-hour permit to travel to Ramallah to finalise his marriage plans. "Any happy feelings I had on the trip were mixed with anxiety," he said.

Khreisheh admitted that his career had been severely affected by the town arrest orders. "I lost too much in my profession as a journalist. The isolation in a remote village kept me out of touch." When he opened a press office in the town of Tulkarm — although Zanabeh village is located within the borders of Tulkarm — the Israelis ordered him to remain in the village.

Khreisheh has few companions except the elderly villagers who remain in Zanabeh. The majority of the young men in the village have left to study abroad. "There is no common political language between me and them," Khreisheh said.

From October 10, 1982 until April 24, 1985, Khreisheh had to sign in at police headquarters in Tulkarm daily at 9:00 am. However, when he opened his press office in Tulkarm a year-and-a-half ago, he was ordered to report to police only once a week. Khreisheh explained that the authorities did not want him to be a journalist. "Therefore, they prevented me from going to Tulkarm daily for three months, lest I go to the press office." After three months, Khreisheh was forced to close his press office and sure enough, he was once again ordered to report daily with Tulkarm police.

A typical day in Khreisheh's life revolves around this visit to the Tulkarm station. After he has signed in, he reads the daily newspapers and magazines and then goes shopping and makes his way home. Back in the village, he reads or walks through the streets. "The most stable thing," Khreisheh said, "is that daily report at the police station. As I approach the station, a bell rings in my mind. The guards there are bored of me. They see me more than they see their wives and children."

Kreisheh during better days in Al Fajr's Jerusalem office.

When the Israelis renew the restriction order, Khreisheh feels nervous for a short period. But he fights this feeling. Sometimes he watches the beautiful village landscapes. He also spends hours gazing at the cows grazing on the hills.

Khreisheh said, "A senior military officer in the Tulkarm governorate once told me, 'Convince me that you committed no offence against the Israeli authorities.' I told him: 'If you have concrete charges against me, prove them in court.' "

Khreisheh added, "The worst part is the negligence I receive from my colleagues at the Arab Journalists Association. They did not even visit me. The world moves rapidly and I can't keep up with it in the village."

Khreisheh's wife was not at home during the visit. Last month she started to work in Taibeh. Khreisheh described her as an understanding woman. "She always encourages me to be steadfast. I also encourage her to accept reality. My one- year-old son Samir has made life better for me. I spend long hours with him." Khreisheh said he has decided to fight his town arrest through legal channels. He hopes that the Arab Journalists Association will aid him in his struggle.

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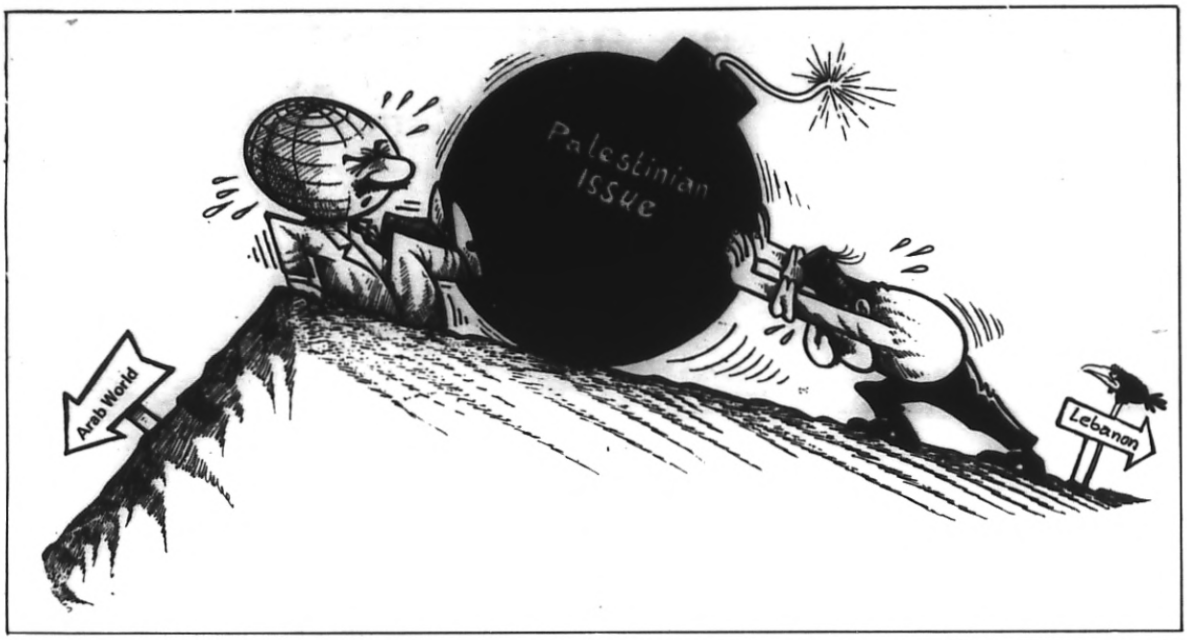



# WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS

The latest Israeli economic measures were the main focus in all local Palestinian newspapers this week. Local papers reported the measures and discussed their possible effect on Palestinians in the occupied territories. The general strike called for by the Israeli Workers Federation (Histadrut) received top front-page headlines. One newspaper called the strike "total paralysis in the Israeli public sector."

The end of the TWA hostage drama received full coverage with all papers running front-page photos showing the emotionally moved freed hostages.

Other subjects that caught the interest of editors of the Arabic papers included the proposed Arab summit and the situation of Palestinians in the Beirut camps.

## The Well-Known American Attitudes

The recent statement by US president Reagan emphasised the American attitudes toward the Palestinian cause. They may be summed up as: rejection of any move that does not go through direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, and insistence on an advance Palestinian recognition of Israel's existence and UN resolutions 242 and 338.

This time the US administration is optimistic that all is going in the right direction because of the Jordanian-Palestinian efforts. The US president has repeatedly emphasised the need to start negotiations even though there are differences. This means that negotiation is an end in itself. But this is not the case. Negotiations may drag on indefinitely.

Any negotiations to solve the Palestinian problem should be based on recognition of the Palestinians' rights to self-determination, and recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. If not, then these negotiations are doomed to failure and will be considered a waste of time.

**AL QUDS**
**June 29**

## Tunis Meeting

The Arab League Council is to meet today to discuss the possibility of convening an Arab summit. As usual, Arab meetings are held only under the urgent pressure of events. Such meetings come to nothing other than statements, resolutions and recommendations.

The first meeting of the Arab League Council, a few weeks ago, was held at the height of the camps war. It resulted in a mere call for a ceasefire. It did not even condemn the criminals.

So we do not expect anything from today's meeting. Nor do we expect anything from an Arab summit if it is held. Only continued Palestinian steadfastness will make the Arab regimes reconsider their positions.

**AL SHA'AB**
**June 29**

## Peres Threatens: Expulsion or Approval

Following the new economic program, the Israeli government may full apart. The two blocks in the government are at loggerheads. So, Peres threatened to dismiss any minister who opposes the economic measures.

But what about the Israeli street? We do not know yet how ordinary Israelis may react. Who is going to drive whom?

The problem with the Israeli government is that it tries to separate the economic problem from the political one. In other words, the Israeli government does not want to realize that a just and comprehensive peace in the area is the only way to a correct economic program. It does not want to understand that wars and occupation are costing billions of dollars.

**AL FAJR**
**July 2**

## Perpetuating Division

The Arab League Council concluded its meetings without agreement on a call for an Arab summit. It seems that any Arab (gathering) within the context of the Arab League serves only to deepen division. Some Arab leaders try always to evade their responsibilities toward their people and the Palestinian cause. Amid these contradictions, Jordan and the PLO are undertaking a joint move to achieve a just and peaceful settlement of the cause. We hope that the Arab countries will support this Jordanian-Palestinian effort which has given some positive results that would soon appear. It's time we stopped classifying Arab countries as reactionary and progressive. When can we smash the sarcastic term that "The Arabs have agreed to disagree"?"

**AL QUDS**
**July 2**

## Our People are the Most Harmed

The present economic plan adopted by the Israeli government will not be better than the previous ones. We think that the Israeli economic crisis is the result of Israeli policy. What concerns us about the new economic plan is its bad repercussion on the Arab citizens who will be the first to suffer. Our people inside will pay the price.

**AL MITHAQ**
**July 2**

## These Measures

If the Israelis describe the economic measures as catastrophic, what can we, the inhabitants of the occupied territories, say about them? Our citizens are deprived of the privileges enjoyed by the Israelis. They are the first to lose their jobs. In addition, they are chased by the tax authorities. At the same time, the Arab citizens are deprived of any economic structure of their own.

**AL SHA'AB**
**July 2**

## The Armed Robbers

As soon as the new economic measures were declared, robbers became very active in the occupied territories. The citizens in the occupied territories have one more worry to add to their worries. The spread of armed robberies is as bad for the Arab residents as the many measures taken against them. We would like to point out in this respect the statements made by the speaker of the Kuwaiti House of Representatives. He called for cutting off the financial aid to the Palestinian people. His call at this time is, we believe a link in the chain of anti-Palestinian measures, and fits in very well with the Israeli government's measures in tightening its harassment of this people.

**AL FAJR**
**July 3**

## Unacceptable Phenomena

The Arab of the late twentieth century, or at least those who claim to be revolutionary and struggling, always choose the easiest way to harm the Arab cause to achieve their goals. We say this in connection with the terrorist attacks against the 'Alia' offices in the Spanish capital. The attack is an indication of political stupidity and a way of imposing unacceptable attitudes on the Arab masses.

This phenomenon of violence and intimidation is getting worse and is threatening the lives of innocent people.

**AL QUDS**
**July 3**

# Palestinian Youth Leave for Computer Camp

Under the sponsorship of the Palestinian Counselling Centre, 100 young Palestinians from Galilee and the West Bank and Gaza will go to Morocco, Tunis, Egypt and Cyprus to participate in computer camps organised by Arab administration and engineering experts who are part of the "International Team," an organisation that promotes technology in the Arab world.

Together with an estimated 2000 Arab youngsters, the Palestinians will receive extensive training on Arabic language computers and engage in sports and cultural activities.

The organisers of this annual programme believe that the technical training the Arab youngsters receive will facilitate technology transfer in the Arab world. The youngsters will also learn collective cooperation and self-reliance.

Dr Mubarak Awad, Director of the Palestinian Counselling Centre, told *Al Fajr* the computer camp would be a unique and unusual experience for the participants, especially for Palestinians who are culturally and politically isolated in the occupied territories.

In the next week, 30 students from the West Bank and Gaza will go to the camps in Alexandria, Egypt and Tunis, Tunisia. Another 25 girls from the Galilee will go to Nicosia, Cyprus and Alexandria. No boys will go from the Galilee because the only computer camps in countries open to Israeli citizens are for girls only.

Thirty-five full and fifteen partial scholarships were given to the West Bank and Gaza Strip participants. The tuition for the camp is US$1250 per person, which covers camp fees and computer time.

Samir Shuqair, a social researcher who led a group of Palestinian youngsters going to the Tangiers camp, said "The students have strong curiosity to learn how to use the computers." Feryal Husseini, whose 14-year-old son went to Tangiers told *Al Fajr*: "I encouraged my son to go in order to make him self-reliant."

The International Team organised the first such camp in 1984, which attracted 163 boys from 14 Arab countries. This year, seven camps were opened in Tunisia, Egypt and Cyprus for both boys and girls aged 10 to 24.

# Mystery Surrounds Slaying of Ramallah Unionist

Nazim Rimawi, 25, a house painter from Beit Rima village in the Ramallah area, was found shot dead June 23 in a grotto on the outskirts of the village.

He was an active unionist and member of the Union of Construction and Public Institutions' Workers in Ramallah.

Rimawi left home on the night of June 21 to attend a wedding party, but never returned. Villagers found his body two days later. The fact that the body was mutilated suggested that Rimawi was tortured before he was shot.

The murder infuriated residents of the occupied territories. Beit Rima villagers and acquaintances of the deceased worker affirmed that he was well-known for his patriotism and good conduct which earned him respect by all. He is not known to have had any enemies, which would seem to rule out the possibility that the murder was committed because of a personal conflict.

Unionists in the occupied territories denounced the crime and accused "Criminal hands" of perpetrating it, in order to stir internal problems among local residents.

## AMAL BREAKS SHORT-LIVED CEASEFIRE

Palestinians in the refugee camps around Beirut continued to rebuild their homes which were destroyed during the Amal siege last month, and life began to return to normal in the wake of the June 18 ceasefire agreement. This, however, was disrupted by a sudden Amal attack on Burj al-Barajneh refugee camp July 3. Many Palestinians were wounded in the attack.

Clashes erupted as a result of a personal scuffle between Amal militiamen and some camp residents. The coordination committee, which is charged with enacting the provisions of the ceasefire agreement and consists of representatives of the Palestinian Salvation Front, Amal, the Lebanese Democratic Movement, and Syria, was very busy trying to put an end to the fighting.

In south Lebanon, the leaders of the Israeli-sponsored "National Guard" and one member of the militia group, were killed in an explosion near the leader's house; inside the 'security belt.'

# Milhem

*Continued from page 8&9*

**agreement would accept 242 if Israel accepted the principle of self-determination.**

**A:** Everybody's trying to bring Chairman Arafat to this point because the position of some empathisers is that if he declares that he accepts 242 he puts the Americans in an embarrassing position, it's a token gesture, and the Americans will be forced to put their money where their mouth is. Just the other day, there was an article in the *Herald Tribune* which said that a senior State Department official in the US said it was his nightmare that the PLO would agree to all the US demands because then the US would be put in a bad bargaining position with Israel.

I think the Americans were worrying about the possibility and then the American administration would be unable to do anything. But look. Why should I say, "I recognise 242" and exclude all the other resolutions, and lose ground among my people, and violate the PNC's resolutions? Why? Why shoud I say *that?* What I gain is that I embarrass the Americans. The Americans have been embarrassed on so many occasions. When they refused to condemn the annexation of Jerusalem. When they refused to condemn the massacres. When they refused to condemn the Israeli practices in south Lebanon. When they refused to condemn so many things, you see. The American administration doesn't worry about condemnation, it doesn't worry about any such thing. Suppose I say, "I recognise 242," and I embarrass Mr Murphy. He says, "You recognise 242, it's alright, I'll let you visit Washington." "Alright, you let me visit Washington, to tell me what? " He will tell me, "Go and negotiate with Peres." He can tell me, "Go and negotiate with Peres" without me saying, I recognise 242, you see. It is a trap which the PLO is drawn into ... All these aims are to finish the PLO. Either you finish it by military means, or by splits, or by having the PLO make concession after concession until they adopt things which are contradictory to the PNC resolutions.

**Q: Do you see any hope at all at this point? Is there any hope for a negotiated settlement on the status of the occupied territories?**

**A:** At present there seems to be very little hope. But it depends on how the Arabs deal with it. If they could unite [in] a summit and do something general, then the Americans and the Israelis would say, "Well, look, they are serious about it, they are united, we cannot challenge that." This is a very important factor.

**Q: You mean it is more that Jordan and the Palestinians?**

**A:** Yes, yes, the Arabs, the Arab summit. But if the present status of the Arabs remains the same, why should they [the Americans] care? They just let it go. I think there are certain things happening in the Middle East, you see, which make things clearer and bring the Arabs closer. For example, Libya was against the PLO, against Arafat. Now, after the fighting in Lebanon which Syria was behind, now there is a split, and this isolates Syria. This leaves Syria alone, you see.

**Q: Do you see any possibility that the Americans would pressure Israel so that it would have to negotiate [on PLO terms]?**

**A:** No, I'm not optimistic about this. It all depends on the insistence of the Palestinians and the insistence of the Arabs and bringing about together a pressure to bear on the Americans. The Americans now feel very relieved, and they are not worrying about the Arabs doing anything serious. I think the United States may pressure Israel if they feel that doing nothing really harms their interests or their image. But how far can an American president go, or a Congressman? He knows what it means, that he's not going to be reelected, he is going to be criticised, you see.

**Q: The mood I've sensed here is a mixture of bitterness, resignation, and some sort of feeble hope. And when people speak about these feelings, what they say is very cynical. They say, "Might makes right. We're in a weak position, and the only solution is for us to get stronger." But you've raised two issues. First, that the PLO hasn't renounced armed struggle, that it is going on. Are you talking about what's been happening in the occupied territories?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Do you think that it is effective?**

**A:** If the Israelis and the Americans feel the Arabs are serious and they will go to all means, then they may think seriously about it, that may be a way out for a peaceful solution. But as long as the Arabs are divided and the Palestinians and the Arabs fight among themselves, why should the Americans care?

**Q: But we are talking about two things. Resistance is increasing in the West Bank, and you said, yes, that that was what you meant by "armed struggle." And then you also raised the issue of division in the Palestinian camp. Bir Zeit has been closed down... I can only conclude that the situation is a stalemate and there isn't much room for immediate hope. So are these talks effective?**

**A:** The thinking was, politically they may pressure or convince the US. The information up to this point was, the US was never persuaded or convinced. Now King Hussein is free to talk with anyone; he represents the government of Jordan. But regarding the Palestinians with talks with the president, or the government of the US, he cannot impose on the PLO. As long as he's committing himself to the accord, then the PLO will give its blessing to it. But if he suggests anything that is not within the accord, contradictory to it, we tell him "Your Majesty, we like to stick to the accord, to make it stronger, to make it more credible. And we agreed among ourselves, Jordanians and Palestinians, about the accords." The problem is not that he went to Washington and talked to the US president. The problem is that he may suggest personally that 242 is the solution. He is free to suggest this, but the PLO is still free to adopt what it wants.

**Q: What is your feeling about the names suggested in the US?**

**A:** Just names. The press has been imagining that if PLO representatives are unacceptable then they, the PLO, may think of this name and that name and so on. But the list of names, whether PLO or non-PLO, has never been discussed in the PLO Executive Committee. Only in the press. Some press reports may say the PLO might choose Edward Said; this is their own concept. But the most important thing is what the PLO decides. Has it decided to delegate Hisham Shirabi or Edward Said? No. Has it decided to delegate PNC members instead of Executive Committee members? No. They have decided on nothing.

**Q: What is your interpretation of the Amman agreement?**

**A:** A state for the Palestinians, confederated with Jordan, PLO representation for the Palestinians, self-determination for the Palestinians. ■

# WEEKLY REVIEW

An exhibit of oils and ceramics by veteran artist Issam Badr drew large crowds and wide media coverage when it opened in Jerusalem's National Palace Hotel June 28. The week-long exhibit included 50 pottery and ceramic pieces as well as 29 oils on canvas, a cumulation of three years of work by the Ramallah-based artist. The art which dealt with folk and popular themes, was highly praised by exhibit viewers.

**June 26, 1985**

### TRAVEL BAN ON JERUSALEM RESIDENTS

Israeli military authorities are continuing to prevent Jerusalem residents from travelling to Jordan via the bridges. The ban has affected many students and employees who need to leave for examinations and work.

### QALANDYA MAN AND SON REMANDED

An Israeli military court in Jenin ordered Omar Mohammed Hussein Amarah and his son, Ahmad, remanded into police custody until July 4. The two, who are residents of Qalandya refugee camp, are charged with bringing letters from abroad to the occupied territories, membership in a Palestinian organisation, and possession of two pistols.

### 2 TEENAGERS GET STIFF SENTENCES FOR STONES

An Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Nasser Abu Wardeh, 17, of Nablus to one-and-a-half years in jail on charges of throwing stones at Israeli vehicles. The court also sentenced Yunis Mohammed Yunis Abu Muhsin, 18, of Toubas to 2 years in jail on the same charges.

### TREE SABOTAGE CONTINUES

Unidentified saboteurs uprooted 150 orange trees owned by Idris el-Ashkar from Izbit el-Ashkar, south of Qalqilya. This is the fifth incident of its kind in recent weeks.

### JERUSALEM WOMAN RELEASED

Israeli authorities released two weeks ago Khawlah Mousa Kaabmih, 55, mother of five from Jerusalem after a month-long detention at the Russian Compound in Jerusalem

Khawlah was accused of planning to kill an Israeli soldier while travelling with five others in a car May 16. She was subjected to brutal torture during detention.

**June 27, 1985**

### 20 DUNUMS GRABBED

The Israelis have confiscated a 20-dunum plot owned by Salah Hindi Saleh, from Jawrat al-Shama' east of Ifrat settlement, in the Bethlehem area. No reason was specified for the action. Israeli bulldozers have already destroyed olive and almond trees planted on the land.

### 2 MERCHANTS RELEASED

Iz el-Din al-Atari and Omran Salhab al-Tamimi, both prominent merchants from Jerusalem, were released from prison after serving 4-month sentences on charges of tax evasion. Though the two had paid steep sums to various tax departments, the Israeli court nevertheless sentenced them.

### BARGHOUTHI SENTENCED FOR DEFYING TOWN-ARREST

Marwan Barghouthi, head of the Bir Zeit University Student Council, was sentenced to 40 days in jail and fined IS300,000 by an Israeli military court in Ramallah for defying a town-arrest order. Barghouthi, who was detained about one month ago, was also sentenced to a 325-day suspended sentence.

### 550 OLIVE AND GRAPE TREES DESTROYED NEAR HEBRON

Unidentified vandals destroyed about 550 olive and grape trees in the village of Bani Na'im in the Hebron area. A delegation from the village lodged a complaint with the Agriculture Department in Hebron, which promised to investigate the sabotage.

### AM'ARI MAN GETS 10 YEARS FOR FIREBOMBS

An Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Iyad Ahmad Fiifel of al-Am'ari refugee camp near Ramallah, to 10 years in prison on charges of throwing petrol bombs at Israeli vehicles. According to the charge sheet, Fiifel headed a 6-member group which carried out at least 5 petrol bomb attacks in the Gaza Strip in the past few months. The other youths in the group were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 3 to 4 years.

### CHILDREN MUST HAVE OWN TRAVEL PERMITS

Children aged 12-16 will no longer be allowed to travel to Jordan on their parents' permits, the Israelis announced. Effective immediately, children must have separate travel permits. The new measure applies to all West Bank and Gaza Strip residents.

### 2 PETROL BOMBS TOSSED AT BUS

Two petrol bombs were thrown on Wednesday night at an Israeli bus as it drove in the centre of Beit Jala, near Bethlehem. Israel Radio said army troops cordoned off the area and began a search.

### NAJAH STUDENT GETS 3 MONTHS FOR FLAG

An Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Taysir Nasrallah, a student at an-Najah University in Nablus, to 3 months suspended and a IS150,000 fine. He was charged with possessing the Palestinian flag and literature "concerning Palestinian organisations."

### BEIT SAHOUR MUNICIPALITY IN CRISIS

The mayor of Beit Sahour, Hanna al-Atrash, is at odds with the majority of the municipal council members, who have protested against his surprise visit to Egypt.

For his part, al-Atrash has accused the council members of paving new streets and roads in the town during his absence and without his knowledge. He has asked the authorities to investigate his allegations.

One council member, Ibrahim Atoun, has resigned in protest. Others are expected to follow.

### 10 MONTHS FOR MAKING BOMB

An Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced Issa Matar Isma'il, 35, of Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, to 10 months in prison and 26 months suspended for concocting bombs.

**June 28, 1985**

### ARAB BUS ATTACKED NEAR BETHLEHEM

Two Molotov cocktails were tossed at a bus carrying Arab workers in the Bethlehem area, an Israeli military spokesman announced. He said there were no casualties, but one of the bombs smashed a bus window, igniting a fire.

Israeli security forces sealed off the scene as army troops and border police scoured the area. No arrests were reported.

### DOZENS ARRESTED IN HIZMAH

In a wide-scale arrest-campaign, Israeli authorities clamped down on the village of Hizmah, north of Jerusalem, and detained dozens of Palestinian youths for unknown reasons.

**June 29, 1985**

### SETTLERS' LEADER INJURED BY STONES

The secretary of the 'Regional Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea and Samaria' was wounded by stones hurled at his car as he drove on the road between Mahmish settlement and Jerusalem. Israel Radio said the car slowed down at a makeshift roadblock, and was then stoned by a group of youths.

**June 30, 1985**

### GAZAN ACQUITTED OF KILLING SETTLER

Odeh Malalheh, 25, of Gaza, was acquitted by an Israeli military court in Gaza of killing Jewish settler Yousef Katzin. Malalheh was detained on January 13, 1984.

### ISRAELIS CRACK DOWN ON DHAHRIYA

For the past two weeks, Israeli troops have been raiding houses in the village of Dhahriya in the Hebron area, harassing and provoking the residents for no reason. Complaints against the army's behaviour have been filed with the Hebron military governorate, but all in vain.

### JERUSALEMITE GETS 6 YEARS

An Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced 27-year-old Khalil Na'im al-Masri, of Jerusalem, to 3 years in prison and a similar suspended sentence on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation and weapon training.

### JENIN TEENAGER JAILED

An Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Ibrahim Mahmoud Mahajneh, 17, of Jenin, to 8 months in jail and 1 year suspended for security offences.

**June 31, 1985**

### ARROUB CAMP HARASSED

Israeli soldiers staged several night raids on al-Arroub refugee camp, south of Bethlehem. Many youths have been arrested and army patrols are stationed outside the camp.

Volunteers from the Jalazon Youth Movement carrying out voluntary work.

July 1, 1985

### ARABS STUNNED BY ECONOMIC MEASURES

Residents of the occupied territories received the news about the new economic plan endorsed by the Israeli cabinet with shock.

### POPE RECEIVES JOINT DELEGATION

Pope John Paul II received members of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation, now on a European tour to seek support for King Hussein's peace initiative and peace efforts in the Middle East. Officials in the Vatican declined to give details about the meeting.

### 2 GRENADE ATTACKS IN JABALYA

A hand grenade was thrown at an army patrol near the eastern entrance to Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. No injuries or damages were reported. Later, another hand grenade was thrown at a border police patrol inside the camp. The grenade did not explode.

### LEVINGER PROVOKES HEBRON MERCHANT

Gush Emunim militant Rabbi Moshe Levinger of Kiryat Arba has prevented an Arab citizen from Hebron from renovating his shop in the commercial market near al-Ibrahimi Mosque, claiming that it is owned by Jews.

### 10 YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Marwan Abd al-Rahman Allan, 25, of Askar refugee camp, was sentenced to 10 years in prison by an Israeli military court in Nablus. He was charged with membership in a Palestinian organisation and possession of weapons.

July 2, 1985

### 14 YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP

An Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced Abd al-Hakim Abd al-Hamid al-Dayrawi, 30, of al-Shaja'iyeh quarter in Gaza, to 14 years in prison. He was charged with membership in a Palestinian organisation, possession of arms and carrying out a grenade attack on Israeli targets.

### SHEEP CONFISCATED

Israeli military authorities confiscated 300 sheep on the pretext that they were grazing on "state land." Residents who lodged a complaint with the police were told that the sheep were to be slaughtered according to the law.

### TULKARM CC PROTESTS TAXES

The Tulkarm Chamber of Commerce and Industry has protested to the Israelis against the taxes imposed on the Arab citizens.

### 5 YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP, WEAPONS

An Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Nablus resident Abd al-Karim Isma'il Dalbah, 28, a university student in Turkey, to 5 years in prison and 3 years suspended on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation, weapon training, and participating in the Lebanon war.

### HIGH COURT BLOCKS 3 DEMOLITIONS

The Israeli High Court issued an order *nisi* (restraining order) prohibiting the authorities from demolishing the homes of 3 residents charged with security offences. The three are: Sa'ed Abdallah Dawabeh, Khaled Ahmad Omar and Jawad Abd al-Halim Mahmoud, from the Ramallah area.

### JENIN TEENAGER JAILED

Ibrahim Mahmoud Mahajneh, 17, of Jenin, was sentenced by the Nablus military court to 8 months in jail and 1 year suspended on charges of security offences.

## Khalidi

*Continued from page 8&9*

**Q: So then, you are saying that the talks may stop at the first stage and not even reach the level of negotiations with Israel?**

A: I don't even necessarily think that it will reach the first stage. But I certainly don't think that it will reach any stage beyond that, because I don't think the Americans will accept an international conference. I think the US objections to sitting down with the Soviets, in the context in which the Palestinians and the Jordanians understand it, are at least as strong, if not stronger, than Israel's objections to sitting down with the PLO. The US does not accept the legitimacy of the Soviet Union as a Middle East power any more than the Israelis accept the legitimacy of the PLO as an actor...

You then come to the question of the Israelis. What pressure is there on Israel to do this? The US will not pressure them to do this. It is a myth that the US will do that — a mirage and an illusion. There is no pressure on Israel because there is no pressure on the US. There is no Arab pressure. There can be no Arab pressure when the Arab regimes are dependent on the US, either economically, or in terms of security, or in terms of a pathetic desire for American goodwill or American recognition.

**Q: Are you saying that the Arab governments can't pressure the US because of their interests?**

**A: Yes. There is no Arab pressure on the US.**

**Q: And so the US will not pressure Israel?**

**A: I don't think the US will pressure Israel, anyway. This is a mistake. If the Arabs want to deal with Israel, the way to do that is not necessarily through the US. The way to deal with Israel is to apply pressure on them directly.**

**Q: The general argument has been that the US has the most obvious leverage over Israel.**

A: Israel also has leverage over the US, in terms of domestic and international politics.

**Q: You are not denying that the US can pressure Israel, if the Arabs determine an issue to be important enough for them to apply pressure on the US?**

A: Vital American interests have to be at stake. In the case of Israel, there are six million people in this country whose primary interest in political life is Israel, because in Israel they have three million relatives. Secondly, there is a major ideological bond between these two countries. They see the world in the same way, they see liberation movements and the Third World in the same way, and they see the Soviet Union in the same way. Of course, when vital American interests are concerned, the US pays no attention to anything else.

We have to be very clear on what we are talking about. American pressure on Israel is not possible in normal foreign policy matters. A threat to vital American interests would be a threat of nuclear war, a threat of a major regional war destroying US interests, a revolution in the world economic system, etc. Now those things in the current Arab reality are out of the question; the Arab regimes have no such capability, let alone intention.

**Q: Assuming that King Hussein's assertion that the PLO is willing to accept UN resolutions 242 and 338 in the context of the Amman agreement is true, why won't Israel agree to talk? Isn't this incentive enough for them?**

**A: I don't think the major political forces in Israel are interested in a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute or of the Palestinian question because there** is no inducement, no pressure. They are not suffering. Israel left Lebanon because Israel could not tolerate the costs. The benefit [to Israel] from occupying the territories, and the Golan for that matter, is much greater than the cost. So as far as the domestic Israeli debate is concerned, this is not an issue. There is no major Israeli politician, from the centre left over to the right, who has the slightest intention of risking his political career by advocating that Israel deal with the PLO, accept Palestinian national self-determination and establish a Palestinian state. This is not a permanent situation. It could be changed by a carrot and by a stick, by positive inducement which appeals to Israeli public opinion, and by increasing the cost of occupation. This can be done, but as of right now, there is very little cost, relative to the benefit.

[In a way] you cannot achieve anything solely with negotiations, and you cannot do anything without some kind of political options.

**Q: Do you think that the PLO believes that out of the current negotiations they will get something they can accept?**

A: I don't think that [there is] anyone in the Palestine National Movement, by the broadest definition, which is to say all Palestinians involved in politics, who is not sceptical. And I think every Palestinian everywhere, [including] the PLO leadership, knows that there are limitations to what can be expected from this approach, and that the best expectations are very modest ones... Preventing certain negative solutions may well be the maximum that can be expected.

**Q: What do you mean?**

**A: I think it is very important to prevent any Arab actor, whether Egypt or Jordan or Syria, from speaking in the name of Palestinians without our consent. If that can be prevented, however it is done, then that is a certain achievement. If Egypt, Syria or Jordan can be stopped from doing this, that would be** positive. Any shift in any part of the American elite's opinion is a gain, even if it were limited and would not lead to a change in US foreign policy. The same is true of Israeli public opinion. We always want all or nothing, and you are not going to get all. One has to analyse the situation and ask: is what one is doing going to achieve a small gain, and is it worth the sacrifice one is making? That is a reasonable question. But to say that you cannot get all, therefore, do nothing, may not be a reasonable calculation.

**Q: Both the US and Israel perceive the PLO to be weak and part of that weakness is that it has no reliable allies. Since the PLO has to negotiate with the US and with Israel if it is to achieve peace through negotiations, do you think this is the right time to do so?**

**A: I think that the idea that the PLO is weak comes from a misreading of the Palestinian situation. I think that Palestinian nationalism has never been stronger and I think that the strength of the PLO is in the fact that the Palestinians have shown that they will not accept anything less than their national aspirations. There seems to be an illusion in Washington that because the PLO is divided, because the PLO is weaker since 1982, then it might be brought to accept a separate solution, the autonomy plan, Camp David or less than the minimum Palestinian aspirations. This is not correct. There is no Palestinian leader who will accept such a thing. Any Palestinian leader who accepts such a thing will cease to be a leader because he will have no support among the Palestinian public. I think that the Palestinians being divided may be less important than it might appear. Events in Beirut last month proved this. In Beirut, a minimum Palestinian solidarity was reasserted as a result of the attack on the camps... what happened in Beirut shows that, in the last analysis, [all Palestinians] are part of the same family. I think that anybody who expected the PLO to accept certain things because it appears weak is very wrong."** ■

# Ramallah Still Thriving Despite Hardships

by Sami al-Aboudi

"Everything has changed. Ramallah has expanded and it has many tall buildings. But it is still very beautiful as always," said Aziz Shunnarah, a Ramallah emigre here on his first visit to his home town since he moved to the US 30 years ago. Shunnarah, in his late 50s, said the city has changed so much over the last 30 years that he barely recognised it. He explained that the main street and the Manara area — the commerical hub of the city — used to be half empty, with only a few shops lining the street. Today, it is lined with small boutiques, restaurants and jewellery stores.

It is well-known that most of the original residents of Ramallah have emigrated primarily to the US. Emigration from Ramallah began at the beginning of the 20th century, when Ramallah men began to travel to the US — wide-open to immigrants at the time — in search of prosperous employment. They would return to their families after earning some money. In 1948, with the establishment of the state of Israel large-scale emigration took place — as did immigration into the city, particularly from the Lydda and Ramleh areas. The demographic composition of Ramallah began to change. Another major wave of emigration took place in 1967, after the Israelis occupied the West Bank. According to rough estimates by some orginial Ramallah residents who still live in the city, there are close to 18,000 Ramallans living in the United States. A mere 2000 of the original residents remain.

Ramallah is still an attractive summer haven for West Bank Palestinians who come from all over to spend a calm, cool afternoon in one of the several parks and restaurants, such as the municipal park *(muntazah)*, Na'oum and al-Bardouni, which line Jaffa street. The parks and restaurants are usually packed with residents who come for a cold beer, ice cream, to smoke a water pipe *(Argileh)* amidst rose gardens and water fountains, in the hope of momentarily escaping the daily stress and problems of life under occupation.

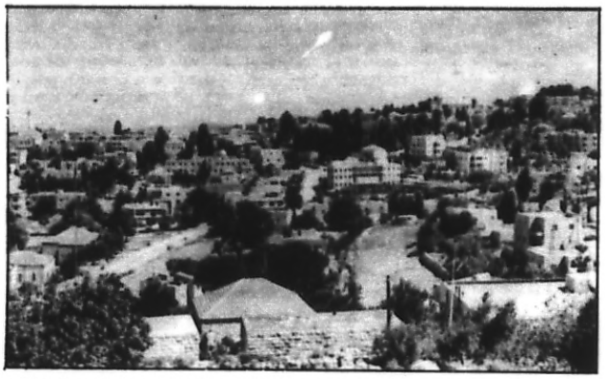
## Problems

Yet Ramallah, which has a population of about 25,000, suffers from the same dificulties as all Palestinian communities under occupation do — trying economic conditions, lack of security, and limited public services which barely meet the city's minimum needs.

The harsh economic conditions have taken their toll on Ramallah. Merchants complain that business has dropped off sharply and their revenues have declined. The wave of new construction in the late 1970s which produced four, five and six story office buildings like the Hanania, Kharraz and Umaya buildings, has tapered off. The handful of construction projects underway all entail expansion of existing buildings.

The economic crunch has led to a wave of thefts in the city. Last week, armed robbers broke into A'azar jewellery store near the city centre, and stole four kilogrammes of gold valued at JD50,000 (US$125,000). This was the third time the shop has been robbed in the last four years. In an unusual turn of events, the thieves were caught and the gold retrieved. Many others have not been so lucky. Kishik, Tannous and Awais jewellery shops were also targets of attempted and successful robberies in the past few months.

The robberies reflect the trying economic reality and have instilled fear and insecurity among residents. Farid Tawasha, member of the elected municipal council, told *Al Fajr* that the growing number of robberies is becoming a source of concern to Ramallah residents. Residents complain that the Israeli police are not doing enough to stamp out the wave of crime. On many occasions the police did not respond to reports about robberies, claiming that no cars or policemen were available to dispatch to the scene of the crime.



TOP: General view of Ramallah. BELOW: a scene of al-Manara square.

## Health Services

Ramallah's health services are the best in the West Bank. Numerous private clinics with specialised physicians, labs and pharmacies are available to meet residents' needs. The Ramallah hospital, which was built between 1960-1961 at the expense of the Ramallah community in the United States, is known for its diverse medical facilities. The 75-bed hospital is the only hospital serving the entire Ramallah district, including nearly 100 villages around the city. After 1967, the Israelis took custody of the hospital. Hospital services degenerated due to the low budget the Israelis allocated to cover the institution's running costs.

But the Ramallah branch of the New York based Ramallah Foundation Incorporated, which built the hospital, continued to develop the hospital. Over the past few years, the Foundation collected donations from various parties, including the Ramallah community in the US, and built a third floor onto the hospital, which now houses the surgery department, and equipped it with a new elevator. The Foundation also built and furnished a new laboratory, which is now considered one of the best in the West Bank. They added the emergency wards and a new laundry section and remodelled the kitchen.

Future plans include installing an intensive care unit, a surgical intensive care unit, and an open-heart surgery department. The estimated cost of these additions is US$300,000.

## Education

Education has always been a top priority for Ramallah residents — perhaps one of the reasons why they developed their village into a major urban centre. The first school in the city, the Greek Orthodox School, was opened in 1838 by the Greek Orthodox monastery in the then small village. In 1846, a German missionary from the Church Missionary Society opened the first missionary school. Since then, several other schools were founded by Catholic, Greek Catholic, Quaker Baptist and Lutheran missionaries.

Today Ramallah has five government-run schools, five UNRWA-run schools (including a Teachers Training Centre), and seven private schools (including one for the mentally retarded). The level of education at government-run schools has deteriorated in Ramallah, as in the rest of the occupied territories, due to the meagre budget and minimal attention given them by the Israelis. Private schools have flourished in their stead. Although private schools charge tuition while government schools are free, the enrolment at private schools has been rising because they offer better education to students.

Ramallah was one of the first West Bank towns to appoint a municipal council to administer its affairs. The first municipal council was established in 1910, and it took the responsibility of developing the town.

Since 1910, the council has been the most important institution in Ramallah. In 1982, however, the municipal council suffered a severe blow when the Israelis sacked the late major Karim Khalaf, who was elected in 1976, and appointed an Israeli, Maurice Biton, to take over the council.

Though it succeeded, to a certain extent, in maintaining basic services, the Israeli-run municipality sharply increased municipal taxes and fees on many permits and licences in order to raise funds to run the city hall. Residents also say that the municipality does not allocate any of its budgets for municipal development. Except for new garbage trucks, city services have not improved. The only large-scale project that the Israeli-run municipality attempted — renovation of the Manara area — turned out to be a failure. Traffic jams at the central intersection were not alleviated; indeed, some say they are even worse now than when the Manara circle sat in the middle of the intersection. Many residents are sad that the Israeli-run municipality removed a city landmark for no concrete benefit.

Aziz Shunnarah agrees. "The Manara circle was more beautiful than the unorganised intersection," he said. ■

## Statement of Support

Palestinians of San Jose, California (pop. 625,000) are actively preparing for the Ramallah Convention, which is taking place in Knoxville, Tennessee July 3-7. The Mayor of San Jose Thomas Mcenery issued the following statement by congratulating the Palestinians:

Whereas: A just and lasting peace in the Middle East is a desire of all Americans; and

Whereas: Democracy and the right to self-determination are the cornerstones of the American way of life; and

Whereas: The Palestinian issue is one of the questions key to solving the Middle East conflict; and

Whereas: We are sympathetic to the needs of the Palestinian people and hope that they may have an opportunity to live in peace; and

Whereas: The American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine, the largest Palestinian-American organisation in the United States, is holding its annual convention the week of July 1, 1985; and

Whereas: This federation has long been committed to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East in which all nations of the region can live safely within secure borders; and

Whereas: The Ramallah Club of San Jose is an active member of this federation and respected citizens of San Jose;

Now, therefore, I, Thomas Mcenery, Mayor of the city of San Jose, do hereby proclaim the week of July 1, 1985 as a salute to the accomplishments of Palestinians in the city of San Jose, California.